OF THE

Nature and Qualification OF RELIGION,

In Reference to

Civil Society.

WRITTEN BY

Samuel Puffendorff,

Counſellor of State to the Late King of *Sweden.*

Which may ſerve as an *Appendix* to the Author's *Duty of Men.*

Tranſlated from the Original.

LONDON:

Printed by *D. E.* for *A. Roper*, at the *Black Boy*, and *A. Boſvile*, at the *Dial*, both over againſt St. *Dunſtan's* Church in *Fleet-ſtreet.* 1698.

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1698
P978

THE

Introductory Epistle,

Presented to the

RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM,

Lord Craven,

Baron Craven

OF

HAMSTEAD MARSH.

My LORD,

THE extraordinary Character you have acquir'd by the joint Consent of those that have the Honour of your Acquaintance, Encourages me to deviate from the common Road, used by our Modern Authors; being made sufficiently sensible, how much a

Mind endow'd with Generous and Modest Inclinations (the inseparable Companions of a Great Soul) disdains the fulsome Praises, which those Gentlemen make the Chief Subject of their Dedications, whenever they pretend to Court the Patronage of Persons of Quality, in behalf of their Treatises. I must confess, I should scarce have had so much Presumption thus to intrude my self into your Lordship's Favour, if I had not been sufficiently persuaded, that the Renown our Author has so deservedly gain'd both here and abroad (and that under the Protection of some of the greatest Princes in Europe) *would be prevailing enough with your Lordship, to pardon an Undertaking, which, if in it self justifiable in nothing else, might perhaps claim the benefit of a general Custom from your Goodness. The Reputation of our Author being so universally and unquestionably established*

stablished among all such as have a true relish of Learning, I might without the least Prejudice to him, supercede to enlarge here upon this Treatise, if it were not rather out of a desire to satisfie the Curiosity of some, who believe to have sufficient Reason for certain Objections made against some Assertions contained in this Treatise, than with an Intention to make the least Addition to a Piece, which, whether in regard of the nicety of the Subject it Treats of, or of the Concatination and force of its Arguments, deserves to be reckoned among the best now extant in Europe. *Those, who center the utmost Felicity of* Civil Society *in a Democratical form of Government, have not been wanting to charge the* Author *with too much Passion for that Doctrine, of Passive Obedience, which leaves Subjects to the absolute Disposal of their Princes; But, besides that, the* Appendix *annexed to*

this Treatise, *written by our* Author, *in opposition to Mr.* Hobbes's *Monstrous Principles concerning this* unlimited Power, *may sufficiently clear him from this Imputation; If these Gentlemen would have taken the pains to make a due comparison of the several Passages both in this, and other Treatises of our* Author, *relating to this Subject, they might, without much difficulty, have been convinc'd of their Error; As far as I am capable of penetrating into the Matter, it is the word* Princeps, *or* Prince, *which sticks most closely in their Stomachs, not considering, That the Words,* Summi Imperantes, *or* Sovereigns; *and that of* Princeps, *or* Prince, *are Synoms to our* Author; *and that out of a great many Passages in this Treatise, it is sufficiently apparent, that he attributes the Sovereign Power not always to one single Person, but sometimes*

times also to a Council invested with the Supream Administration of the Sovereign Authority in the Commonwealth. If it were but only for that Advice given by our Author *at the very beginning of his* Appendix *to young Lawyers,* to wit, *to take care,* that under the Pretence of maintaining the Prerogatives of Princes, they should not be prodigal of their Liberty and Property, *and his asserting the Foundation of* Civil Societies *to be built upon the* Common Consent *of mutual Defence against Violences; This alone, I say, might be a convincing Argument to any unbyass'd Person, that his Aim was very remote from maintaining an Arbitrary Power in the State. The next thing laid to our* Author's *Charge is, that he so entirely separates the Christian Religion from the State, as not to have the least Interference with one another; whereas the contrary is now*

a-days practised in most Christian States, and in the Commonwealth of the Jews (instituted by God's peculiar Direction) this Union was inseparable. It cannot be denied, but that the outward Form of Church Government, especially among the Protestants, is in a great measure, and in most places adapted to that of the State; it being evident, that most of the Monarchical States, Episcopacy, *as most suitable with that Constitution, was never abolished; as on the contrary, the same was quite extirpated in the* Protestant Commonwealths. *This is most particularly observable among the* Lutherans, *who, tho' all agreeing in Point of Doctrine, are nevertheless, so far different from one another in the Ceremonial Point, and outward Form of Church Government, that in outward Appearance, they seem'd to be so many several Churches. Thus in the two Northern*

King-

Kingdoms of Sweden *and* Denmark, *the Episcopal Authority (tho' much diminished in its Revenues) is retained to this day; whereas in some Commonwealths in* Germany, *where the same Religion is Established, it is quite abolished, and not the least footsteps of Subordination of Priest; to be met with. But this Objection is easily cleared, if we take into due Consideration, that it being the Intention of our* Author *to represent in those places Religion in its genuine and native Constitution, freed from all what is foreign to its true Genius, he did not think it convenient, to clog it with any thing that was not an Essential part of it; especially when his chief aim was to shew the real difference betwixt the Christian and Jewish Religion. There are also not a few, who prompted by a preposterous Zeal, have imputed to our Author a certain kind of* Libertinism *in Religion, for which, I can see no other Reason, than that they are dissatisfied with his Assertions against any thing that has the least resemblance of Persecution upon the score of Difference of Opinions. I am well satisfied, that the Reasons alledged by him, are so solid in themselves, and so exactly applied to this Purpose, that they cannot but be Convincing*

to

to all such, as are not prepossessed either with By-Interest, or a most stupid Ignorance. For, if the Slavery of the Body be absolutely repugnant to the Inclinations of a generous Soul, How much more insupportable must the Slavery of the Mind be to a sublime Genius, elevated above the common Sphere of bigotted Zealots Ignorance, being the Mother of perverted Zeal, and consequently of a persecuting Spirit, the same ought to be look'd upon as the common Enemy of all such as are guided by the Light of true Reason? I cannot but take notice here, that our English *Modern Clergy has of late gain'd so peculiar a Character of following so closely these footsteps of convincing such as differ from them in Opinion, rather by strength of Argument, than any forcible Means, that I do not know whether they are not preferrable in this Point, before any other in* Europe. *If any one questions th Truth of it, I appeal to Mr.* Toland's *Case, concerning his Treatise, Entituled,* Christianity not Mysterious. *It is both beyond my scope, and the compass of a Letter, to enter upon the Merits of the Cause on both Sides, it will be sufficient here to refer my self to what has been Published against him lately here in* England,

gland, *and in other Places; All which, if duely compared, will ſoon evince, how much the* Engliſh *Clergy has out-done the reſt, both by force of Argument, and a generous, gentle Behaviour. But I am afraid I have abuſed your Lordſhip's Patience; I will therefore conclude with recommending both my* Author *and my* Self, *to your Lordſhip's Protection, begging Leave to ſubſcribe my ſelf,*

My Lord,

Your Devoted Servant.

J. Crull. M. D.

THE

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OF THE
Nature and Qualification
OF
RELIGION,
In Reference to
CIVIL SOCIETY, &c.

AMong all those Questions, which have for many Ages past been Controverted among Christians, this may be deem'd one of the Chiefest, which Treats of the Nature, Authority, and Power of the Church; and which of the several Christian Sects ought most justly to claim the Title of the *True Church*. The *Romanists* keep this for their last Reserve, when Engag'd with the *Protestants*, That they Attribute the Name of the *True Church* only to themselves, and boldly stigmatize all such as are not of their Communion, with the Names of rebellious Deserters. This is the main Bulwark they rely upon; thinking it sufficient to Alledge in their own behalf; That they are not obliged so strictly to Examin, and maintain every Article of their

Faith againſt the *Proteſtants*; ſince, whatever Objections may be made out of the Holy Scripture, the ſame ought to be rejected as Erroneous, if not agreeable with the Interpretations and Traditions of their Church; Thus making themſelves both Judges and Witneſſes in their own Cauſe. Beſides this, it is to be look'd upon as a Matter of the greateſt Conſequence, both in regard of the Chriſtian Church, and the Publick Safety in a State, to know exactly, what bounds ought to be preſcribed to the Prieſtly Order in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs; as likewiſe to determin, how far the Power of Sovereigns extends it ſelf in Eccleſiaſtical Matters: For, if either of them tranſgreſs their Bounds, it muſt of neceſſity prove the Cauſe of great Abuſes, Diſturbances and Oppreſſions, both in Church and State. I was the ſooner prevail'd upon to Search into the very bottom of this Queſtion, at this juncture of Time, when not only the *Romiſh Prieſts* apply all their Cunning for the rooting out of the *Proteſtants*, but alſo ſome of the greateſt Princes in Chriſtendom (ſetting aſide the Antient way of Converting People by Reaſon and force of Arguments) have now recourſe to open Violence; and by Dragooning, force their miſerable Subjects to a Religion, which always appear'd abominable to them. But if we propoſe to our ſelves to examin this Point, according to its own ſolid Principles (as we ought to do) without having recourſe to Ambiguous Terms and Tergiverſations, it is abſolutely requiſite, that we trace the very Original of Religion in General; and of the

Chriſtian

Christian Religion in Particular, so as to Examin both their Natural Qualifications in reference to Civil Society. For, if this, which is to be look'd upon as the Foundation Stone, be well Secured: And we afterwards do look into the Scriptures, to investigate, in what manner Christ himself has represented his Doctrine to us; it will be no difficult Task to judge, whether, according to the Institution of our Saviour, there ought to be an Ecclesiastical Sovereignty exercised by *Priests*? Or, whether Princes have a Right to make use of an Absolute Power? Or can Compel their Subjects to Obedience by Force of Arms, in Matters of Religion?

Concerning Religion before Civil Societies were Instituted.

§. 1. That there is a Supream Being, the Author and Creator both of the Universe, and especially of Mankind, which ought to be acknowledged and worshipped as such by Mankind, as they are Rational Creatures, has been generally receiv'd, not only among Christians, but also by most of the Pagan Philosophers, that to pretend to demonstrate it here, would be Superfluous, and perhaps might be taken as done in prejudice of the judicious Reader; since, scarce any body, that is not beyond his right Wits, can be supposed, now a days, to make the least Doubt of the Verity of this Assertion. The true Knowledge of Divine Worship arises from two several Springs: For, we either by true Ratiocination, deduced out of the Light of Nature, may be Convinced of those Sentiments we ought to have of God, and what Reverence is due to him from us Mortals: Or else, some Matters, being be-

yond our Apprehenſion, by the bare Light of Nature, are by God's ſpecial Command Revealed to Mankind. Both Kinds are to be the Subject of the following Treatiſe; with this Reſtriction nevertheleſs, not to inſiſt upon each particular Head of either of them, any further, than they have relation to Civil Society.

Every Man is accountable for his Religion.

§. 2. The firſt Thing which is to be conſidered, both in Natural and Revealed Religion, is, That every body is obliged to worſhip God in his own Perſon, Religious Duty being not to be performed by a Deputy, but by himſelf, in Perſon, who expects to reap the Benefit of religious Worſhip, promiſed by God Almighty. For Man, being a rational Creature, owing its Off-ſpring to God alone, is thereby put under ſuch an indiſpenſible Obligation, that the Coſideration of worſhipping him, to the utmoſt of his Power, can never be entirely exſtinguiſhed in a rational Soul. And here lies the main difference betwixt that Care, which, we ought to have our Souls, and that of our Bodies; the latter of which, may be committed to the Management of others, who being to be Accountable for all Injuries, which may befall us under their Tuition, we are thereby freed from any Guilt againſt our ſelves. So do we commit our ſelves, when we paſs the Seas, to the Management of the Maſter of a Ship, by whoſe ſole Care, without our own Aſſiſtance, we are conducted to the deſired Port. But, no body can ſo entirely transfer the Care of his Soul, and the Exerciſe of Religious Worſhip from himſelf to another

another Man, as to make him alone Accountable for all Miscarriages, and to free himself from Punishment. *Every one of us shall give Account of himself to God.* And it is in vain for St. *Paul* to wish, *to be Accursed from Christ, for his Brethren, his Kinsmen, according to the Flesh.* And, though it is undeniable, That those who have been negligent in taking care of other Peoples Souls, that were committed to their Charge, shall receive Punishment; Nevertheless, these, whose Souls have been thus neglected, shall perish with them, for having put too much Trust in others, and neglected their own Salvation. As it is plainly expressed by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, 33. 7, 8. *And the Just shall live by Faith.* And the Evangelist St. *Mark*, speaks without any Reservation. *He that believed not, shall be damned*; without distinction, whether you were seduced by others, or whether you have renounced your Faith for worldly Ends. Rom. 14. 12. Rom. 9. 3. Habak. 2. 4. *Mark*, 16. 16.

§. 3. From whence it is evident, That, Religion having its relation to God, the same may be exercised without the Communion of a great many; And, that a Man ought not to judge of the Soundness of his Doctrine or Religion, by the Number of those that adhere to it. So, that it is manifest, That, at the beginning of the World, our first Parents might, and did really perform Religious Duties; And, that, if one alone, or a few together, live in a solitary Place, they are therefore not to be deem'd to live without Religion, because, they do not make up a Congregation. For, God being the only Judge, of what is *How the same is to be exercised in the free State of Nature.*

beſt pleaſing to him in his Worſhip, knows and ſearches the very bottom of our Hearts; And, ſince we are not able, without his Aſſiſtance, to perform religious Duties, the ſame can't be eſteem'd properly our own Invention. As thoſe that live in the free State of Nature, are not Subject to any Human Power, So, in the ſame State, their Religion, having only a relation to God Almighty, unto whom alone they are bound to pay Reverence, it is free from all Human Force or Power; which, in this State of Natural Freedom, they may exerciſe, either according to the Dictates of Reaſon, or, according to Divine Revelation; and, according to the beſt of their Knowledge, may diſpoſe the outward Form of their religious Worſhip, without being accountable to any body, but God Almighty: Neither can they be Controuled, or forced, rather to worſhip God according to another's, than their own Opinion. But, if any body pretends to bring them over to his Side, he ought with ſuitable Arguments, to Convince them, how far he is in the Right, and they in the Wrong. There may be, beſides this, another Reaſon be given, why no body, in what Condition ſoever, ought to be forced to another Man's Religion; becauſe the Knowledge of Truth can't be implanted in us, without proper and convincing Arguments, ſuch as are capable of preparing our Minds for the receiving of the True Doctrine of Religion: And, as to the Myſteries of the Chriſtian Religion, which tranſcend our Reaſon, theſe muſt be acquired by the aſſiſtance of Divine Grace, which is contrary

trary to all Violence. 'Tis true, a Prince may force a Subject to make an outward Confession by way of Mouth, to comply in his Behaviour, with his Commands, and to dissemble his Thoughts or to speak contrary to his Belief; but he can force no body to believe contrary to his own Opinion. For we ought *to believe with all our Hearts*; but, whatever is done in order to obtain any worldly Advantage, or to avoid an imminent Evil of this kind, can't be done with all our Heart. But, *Faith cometh by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God.* Neither does our Saviour force his Word upon us; but by all gentle means, persuades us to a Compliance with his Will, according to St. *Paul's* Saying: *Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

Acts, 8. 37.

Rom. 10. 17.

2 Cor. 5. 20.

§. 4. It is an unquestionable Truth, and generally received among Mankind, That one is obliged to give a helping-hand to another in several Respects: In the same manner it is with Religion; that these who by nearest of Blood, are in Duty bound, to take Care of young Peoples Education, ought at the same time to Instruct them in the true Knowledge of God, and prepare their Minds for the receiving of the Christian Doctrine. 'Tis upon this score, that this Care touches most nearly all Parents, in regard of their Children, it being the principal Part of Paternal Duty, to take effectual Care, that they may be throughly Instructed in all Matters, relating to God and his holy Word; and to be encouraged in all manner of religious Exercises: For it is

The first Care of religious Worship lodged in Parents.

too dangerous, to leave young People to their own Inclinations, till they may be capable, by the Strength of their own Reason, to learn their Duty towards God. And it would be much more dangerous, to defer it under pretence or expectation of Revelations to be made upon that account, at this time, when the Word of God is already planted and established among us: Besides, that Children soon grow head-strong and refractory, if they are not in their tender Age, accustomed to pious Exercises. Nevertheless, Parents ought not to exercise this Paternal Office any otherwise, than in a manner suitable to the Genius of the Christian Religion, which will have them not to act with Violence, but to be diligent and assiduous in Teaching, Exhorting, Praying, and announcing God's Wrath. Wherefore, the Priestly Office was originally joined with the Paternal, in the antient Fathers of Families; and *Abraham* is commended both for a good Father, and a good Master of his House, because he instructed his Children in all manner of Piety, and himself Administred Circumcision. The like Commands were made to Parents, both in the Old and New Testament; and the Patriarch *Jacob*, removed the Idols out of his Family, not by Compulsion, but by Instructing those of his House in the Knowledge of the true God, who thereupon, voluntarily surrendred those Idols to his Disposal. This part of the Paternal Office, like all the rest, does cease as soon as a Son, after leaving his Father's House, comes to set up for himself, and consequently becomes the Father of

Gen. 18. 19.

Ge. 17. 20 Deut. 6. 7. 11. 19. Eph. 6. 4. Gen. 35: 2, 3, 4.

a ſeparate Family, and enjoys the ſame Rights, which his Father had before over him. And, tho' perhaps in ſuch a Caſe a Father may ſtill retain the priviledge of giving ſome Paternal Admonitions to his Sons, yet ought the ſame to be look'd upon to reſemble in their Nature our laſt Will or Teſtament, which does not always imply properly a Command; but ought to be obſerved for its good Intentions ſake, and to ſhew a due Reverence to the Memory of a Father, never to be neglected by any, that will not at the ſame time profeſs themſelves guilty of Improbity.

§. 5. Out of what has been ſaid before, it is moſt evident, That Civil Governments were not erected for Religions ſake; or that Man did not enter into Civil Societies, that they might with more conveniency eſtabliſh, and exerciſe their Religion. For, ſince Religious Exerciſes could be performed as well by a few, as by a great Number; and in a ſmall Congregation as well, as in a great one, it was unneceſſary to erect ſeveral great Societies on that account: Beſides, that thoſe who committed open violences againſt others, which was the firſt motive that obliged Men to enter into Societies for their mutual Defence, did not aim at the Religion of Mankind; but, to robb theſe that were weaker than themſelves of their Liberty, Life, and Fortunes. Neither does a Man's Probity and Piety receive the leaſt addition, by the Number of People, which join in their Devotion; For every one muſt be acceptable to God Almighty upon his own account; neither is a Man always deem'd the

Civil Societies were not inſtituted for Religious ſake.

more

more pious, because he lives among such as are pious themselves. Those Patriarchs that liv'd before Civil Societies were erected, are no less Famous for their Piety, than those that lived afterwards under a settled Government. From whence it is evident, That Religion is not an ingenious Invention of the first Founders of Commonwealths, but as antient as Humane Race it self; it being sufficiently apparent, that Mankind did not enter into Civil Societies, till long after, being enforced thereunto, by great and weighty Reasons; tho' at the same time, it cannot be deny'd, but that some have cunningly abused Religion, for obtaining their Ends in the State; But, Religion in it self considered, is not made subordinate to the State; or to be deem'd a proper Instrument to serve a States Turn, and to keep the People in Obedience. And, when Religion is called, *Vinculum Societatis Civilis, The Cement of Civil Society*, it must be taken in this Sense; That if all Religion and Regard, which ought to be had to God's displeasure, were abolished, there would be no Tie left, strong enough to oblige Mankind to a compliance with those Laws and fundamental Constitutions, which are the original Foundation of all Commonwealths; And, that, without the fear of being accountable to God Almighty, no Human Power alone would be prevailing enough to bridle the Enormities of some stubborn and refractory Spirits.

§. 6. It

§. 6. It being therefore beyond queſtion, That Commonwealths were not erected for Religions ſake, it is eaſie to be underſtood, that the antient Fathers of Families, when they firſt ſubmitted themſelves under a Civil Government, were thereby, not obliged to ſurrender at the ſame time, their Religion in the ſame manner, as they did their Lives and Fortunes to their Sovereigns, for the obtaining the End of Civil Society, which was their common Security. The more, becauſe Religion was not inſtituted for the obtaining of this mutual Security, and as ſuch, do's not contribute any thing towards the maintaining of Civil Society. Religion ariſes from a much more noble Spring, than Civil Government; and more ſtrictly obliges Mankind, than any Civil Power; and therefore is unalterable in its Nature. Thus it would be not only uſeleſs, but imply a Contradiction; if a Man, who is to become a Subject to a Civil Government, ſhould be obliged to ſwear Allegiance to his Sovereign, in theſe following Terms: *I. N. N.* Submit my Will entirely to your Commands; I promiſe to love, honour, and truſt in God, according to your Pleaſure; and to put more Confidence in you than in God Almighty; to ſet aſide all your Command, all Love, Reſpect and Duty, which I owe to God Almighty, and to perform ſuch things as I know to be contrary to him and his Commands. For, here ought to be remembred, what the Apoſtles ſaid: *We ought to obey God rather than Man.* Acts 5. 29. And, whenever Sovereigns pretend to extend thus far their Authority, they tranſgreſs their Bounds; and if they inflict any Puniſhment on their

Subjects did not ſubmit their Opinions in Matters of Religion, to the Diſpoſal of their Sovereigns.

their Subjects, for refusing to be obedient to their Commands, on this Account; such an Act ought to be look'd upon, as illegal, unjust, and tyrannical. God has verified this by extraordinary Miracles: It was an absurd and illegal Proceeding, when *Darius*, overpersuaded by his Courtiers, who intended to lay a Trap for *Daniel*, issued out his Proclamation, That *no body, for thirty Days should ask a Petition of any God or Man.* For, what concerns had the King with his Subjects; Prayers (unlawful Prayers, being not accepted of by God Almighty) especially with those made in private? For, if any one should have prayed in publick against the King, it would been a quite different Case; and such a one had deservedly received Punishment, as an Enemy to his Sovereign. Wherefore, *Daniel* did very well, in continuing his daily private Prayers, according to his former Custom; notwithstanding the King's impious and foolish Command; and, was, for this Reason, by an extraordinary Miracle, delivered out of the Lions Den. In the same manner did God preserve *Daniel*'s three Companions in the midst of the Flames, because they refused to worship the Golden Image, according to the King's Command: Though, at the same time, it is very probable, that this Image, set up by *Nebuchadnezar*, was not intended to be worshipped as a God; but only as a Sign or Emblem of that Eternal Being, which he would have to be Adored and Worshipped by his Subjects. Certainly, *Jeroboam*, could not be so much besides himself, as to imagine,

Dan. 6. 7. 9.

Dan. 3. 27, 28.

gine, or to pretend to perſuade the Jews, That the Golden Calves, which he had cauſed to be made, were the ſame God, by whoſe Power they were brought out of *Ægypt*; But he ſet them up as a Token, or Repreſentative, whereby to put them in mind of the Benefits received from God, the great Deliverer of *Iſrael*; and that they might not want places where to pay their Devotions, and perform their religeous Duties. So, that, though he did not fall off from God, but only, for Reaſons of State; and becauſe he thought it belonging to his Royal Prerogative, made an Alteration in the outward Form of Worſhip; Yet was he, with his whole Family, rooted out of *Iſrael*, and the Jews, for having obeyed and followed their King, in his Idolatry, paid for it with the Loſs of the *Holy Land*.

Joſeph. Arch. 8. 3.

2 Reg. 19. 17, 16.

§. 7. Sovereigns are nevertheleſs, not excluded from having a certain Power and Diſpoſal in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs, as they are the Supream Heads and Governours of the Commonwealth; and are therefore ſtil'd, the Publick Fathers, and Fathers of their Native Country. And, as has been ſaid before, as it is one of the Principal parts of Paternal Duty, to implant Piety into their Children; ſo Sovereigns ought to take care, that Publick Diſcipline (of which the Reverence due to God Almighty, is one main Point) to be maintained among their Subjects. And, whereas the Fear of God is the Foundation Stone of Probity, and other Moral Vertues; and it being the Intereſt of Sovereigns, that the ſame be by all means encouraged in a State; and that Religion

What Power, according to the Law of Nature, belongs Sovereigns in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs?

Religion is the ſtrongeſt Knot for the maintaining a true Union betwixt Sovereigns and their Subjects. (God being a God of Truth, who has commanded, that Faith and Compacts ſhould be ſacred among Men:) It is therefore a Duty incumbent upon Sovereigns, to take not only effectual Care, that Natural Religion be maintain'd, and cultivated among their Subjects; But they have alſo a ſufficient Authority, to Enact ſuch Laws as may enable them, to keep their Subjects from committing any thing, which tends, either to the total Deſtruction, or the Subverſion, of the Capital Points of Religion: As if, for inſtance, any one ſhould attempt to deny publickly the Exiſtency of a God, and his Providence, to ſet up plurality of Gods, to worſhip fictitious Gods, or Idols in Gods ſtead, to ſpread abroad Blaſphemies, for to worſhip the Devil, enter with him into a Compact, and ſuch like Actions. For, if theſe are kept within the compaſs of Peoples Thoughts, without breaking out into publick or outward Actions, they are not puniſhable by the Law, neither can any Humane Power take Cognizance of what is contained only, and hidden in the Heart. And, as to what concerns thoſe Ceremonies which have been annexed to Religious Worſhip, though it be undeniable, that one of the main Points, towards the maintaining a good Order in the State is, that a due Uniformity, ſhould be obſerved in the ſame; Nevertheleſs, Sovereigns need not be ſo very anxious on this Account, becauſe theſe Differences

ferences do not Overturn Religion it ſelf; neither do they (as ſuch conſidered) diſpoſe Subjects to raiſe Diſturbances, and Diſſention in the State. Neither can Sovereigns be any great Looſers by the Bargain, if their Subjects differ in ſome Ceremonies, no more, than if they were divided into ſeveral Opinions, concerning ſome Philoſophical Doctrine. But, this is beyond all doubt, that, if under a Religious Pretext, Subjects pretend to raiſe Factions, which may prove dangerous to the State, or hatch other ſecret Miſchiefs; theſe are Puniſhable by the Supream Magiſtrates, notwithſtanding their Religious Pretences; for, as Religion (in its ſelf conſidered) is not the cauſe of Vices; ſo ought it not to ſerve for a Cloak, wherewith to cover and protect ſuch treacherous Deſigns. So, the *Roman Senate* did acquit themſelves very well in their Station, when they Aboliſhed theſe Debaucheries, which were crept into the State, with the *Bachanals*. But thoſe Sovereigns, who have tranſgreſſed theſe Bounds, by compelling their Subjects to a Religion of their own Invention, have, without doubt, abuſed that Power, wherewith they were entruſted. Neither have theſe Princes acquitted themſelves much better in their Station, who have Perſecuted their Subjects, for no other Reaſon, but becauſe they Profeſſed a Religion different from their own, without making a due Enquiry, whether their Doctrine were Erroneous or not. Thus the Proceedings of *Pliny* the Younger, (a Man otherwiſe of a very good Lev. 39. 2, 10.

good Temper) againſt the Chriſtians in *Bithynia*, cannot in any wiſe be juſtified; For he confeſſes himſelf, That he never was preſent at the Tryals of the Chriſtians; and was therefore ignorant both of their Crime, and conſequently, of what Puniſhment they deſerved. For theſe are his Words: *I only ask ſome of them ſeveral times, whether they were Chriſtians; which they having conſtantly Profeſſed they were, I ordered them to be carried to the Place of Execution; it being plain to me, That, of what Nature ſoever their Confeſſion might be, ſuch an inflexible Humour, and obſtinate Behaviour, ought not to go unpuniſhed.*

Plin. to. Ep. 97.

Of the Nature of revealed Religion.

§. 8. But the Condition of Mankind being ſuch, That it was impoſſible by the ſole help of Natural Religion, to attain to that Felicity which was propoſed by the great Creator; it had pleaſed the Great and All-wiſe God, to reveal unto us Mortals his Will; and to inſtruct us by what means we may obtain his Favour, and how he expects to be Worſhipped by us. It is for this reaſon, that no body of a right Underſtanding ought to make the leaſt Scruple, but, that all ſuch Matters as God has revealed to us, in a manner ſurpaſſing our Natural Underſtanding, ought to be reverenced by Mankind, and to be received with a general conſent and ſubmiſſion. Among the ſeveral Doctrines, thus revealed, the Article of Juſtification, or the Purging us from Sins through the Merits of our Saviour, was one of the Principal ones. And, I am of Opinion, that theſe bloody Sacrifices, which from the very Beginning of the

the World were Instituted by God's Command, were so many Emblems of this our Redemption by the Blood of Christ; for, without this supposition, it would seem scarce Rational, that a living Creature, sensible of Death and Pains, and which cannot be killed without great Torments, should be destroyed for the Honour of its Creator. As if Man should enter into the Work-House of an Artificer, and by destroying his Handy-Work, pretend to do him an extraordinary Honour. This most Antient way of Sacrificing (the chief Badge of True Religion, before it was Corrupted by Ignorance or Superstition) though it was no small addition to Natural Religion; yet did it cause no alteration as to the Exercise of it. For, in the State of Natural Freedom, every one had a right to Sacrifice, though at the same time, every one was not obliged to Sacrifice for himself. For, this Ceremony of Sacrificing being only an Emblem, representing the future Redemption of Mankind, one and the same Sacrifice might answer that End, in respect to all that were present at the time of the Sacrifice. From hence it was become a Custom, that the Heads of each Family used to Sacrifice for the rest; and if more Families were assembled in order to Sacrifice, it was to be Administred by him that was chosen by the rest, for that purpose. And it is observable, that the same Person that had the Right of Sacrificing, had also the Power of prescribing time and place for that Sacrifice. Thus when afterwards God had Ordained the Ceremony or Sacrament of Circumcision; *Abraham* did Administer the

the ſame in his Houſe, as being the Father of his Family. What we have alledged concerning the Right of Sacrificing, may be proved from thence, that both *Abel* and *Cain*, after they had left their Fathers Houſe, did Sacrifice. And by ſeveral Paſſages in *Geneſis*, we are informed, That the Antient Patriarchs (being Fathers of their Families) did erect Altars. So, *Micha* ſet up a Houſe of Gods at home, during the Anarchy in *Iſrael*, there being then neither King nor any other Man, that took care of the Publick Worſhip; thus attributing to himſelf (though unjuſtly) the ſame Right, which the Ancient Fathers of Families had been poſſeſs'd of in more Antient Times.

Gen. 4. 3, 4.

Jude 17. 5, 6.

Amongſt the Jews there was a ſtrict Union betwixt the Church and State.

§. 9. It had pleaſed God, according to his Wiſdom, not to ſend our Saviour, or the Meſſias into the World ſoon after the Creation, at a time when the whole World was not ſtockt with a ſufficient number of Inhabitants; leſt his Sufferings might be obliterated by Oblivion, or by a too long Tract of Time, turned into a Fabulous Relation: But he was to appear amongſt us, after the whole Earth was filled up every where with Inhabitants, and Mankind was arrived, as it was, to its Age of Perfection. It was alſo thought convenient, and almoſt neceſſary, that the Meſſias ſhould not appear in this World all upon a ſudden, but after his Coming had been long foretold and expected, in order to raiſe a more ardent deſire after him in us Mortals; and that he might find the eaſier a Reception amongſt us, when his Deeds were found ſo agreeable to what was Propheſied concerning him, ſo many Ages before.

fore. And, that these Predictions or Prophesies might not, through length of time, come to decay, and be buried in Oblivion, God Almighty had in a most peculiar manner, recommended them to the Care and Custody of the Jews, amongst whom, he, as it may be said, kept his Records of Prophesies; it being the most likely, that that same Nation, from whence the Messias was one day to have his Off spring as Man, upon Earth, would preserve them with their utmost Care, to their great Honour and Advantage. It was questionless in a great measure for this Reason, that God entered with them into so strict a League, Circumcision being made the Bagde, whereby to distinguish them from other Nations: And being afterwards become a very numerous People, and freed from the *Ægyptian* Bondage, he himself established at once, both their Civil Government and Religion, (which was not to cease, till the appearing of our Saviour on Earth;) and this in such a manner, that there was always to remain a strict Union betwixt their Religion and State. Therefore the Administration of Religious Worship was committed to one particular Tribe amongst them, unto whom, according to God's special Command, no Lands were allotted, lest they might thereby be inticed to mind Temporal Possessions and Riches, more than God's Service; but were to be maintained out of the Tenths and other Revennes belonging to the Altar, in which Sense God is called, *The Portion of the Levites.* There was also a certain place assigned for the Publick Exercise of Di-

vine Worſhip, with Exclusion of all others; and their whole Religion was thus diſpoſed by God's peculiar Order, that the ſame could not be put in practiſe, unleſs it were in a free Nation, independent from any Foreign Power. This was the true Reaſon why the Jews, unleſs they would overturn the Foundation of their Religion, could not be entirely United with any Foreign State. And, as the Jewiſh Religion and State were of the ſame Date, their Laws both Eccleſiaſtical and Civil having been Conſtituted at the ſame time, and contained in one Book; ſo was the Union betwixt their Religion and State, ſo entire, that the firſt could not remain ſtanding, after the fall of the laſt; and therefore the deſtruction of the Temple, and of the Commonwealth of the Jews, was an infallible Sign of the total abolishment of their Religion. They were called God's People, and the Holy People, becauſe the whole Jewiſh Nation publickly profeſſed the True Religion.

Who was the Supream Head of the Jewiſh Church.

§. 10. But, becauſe God himſelf had Eſtabliſhed the Jewiſh Religion and Ceremonies and fortified them by very ſevere Laws, no body upon Earth had Power to make the leaſt alteration in them, or to add any thing to, or to diminiſh from them. The Kings, *Saul* and *Uſiah* paid dearly for it, becauſe they attempted to interfere with the Levites in their Office. And thoſe of the Jews that introduced a Foreign Religious Service, are in the Holy Scripture Branded with Infamy. So that their Kings had no further Power in Religious Concerns, than the Supream Inſpection, that every

ry one in his Station (not excepting the High Priest himself) did Exercise his Office, according to God's Commands; and that the Ecclesiastical Constitutions were kept inviolable. Neither did the Tribe of *Levi*, or the Priestly Order make up a separate Body independent from the State, but they were actually considered as part of the Nation, and Subjects of their Kings; who, as we read, sometimes Deposed them for several Crimes, and if negligent in their Office, used to give them severe Rebukes. King *David* went further, for he, to maintain a decent Order in the Church, disposed the several Ecclesiastical Functions among the Priests and Levites, and ordered that the Singers and Door-waitors should take their places by Lott, which nevertheless was not done without the Advice of the Chief Men and Elders of the People, and the whole Tribe of *Levi*. In so doing, he did not assume to himself the Power of Disposing or Altering any thing in their Religion, but only over those that were Ordained by God Almighty for that Function, *viz.* to Establish such an Order among them, the better to enable them to Exercise their Function without Confusion. For, when afterwards, instead of the Tabernacle, a Temple was to be Erected, that is to say, when instead of a slight and decayed Building, a most noble and firm Structure was to be built, the same was not undertaken without God's Advice. This Temple being the Principal of all Publick Structures, it was the King's Care to see it Repaired in due time, who also might levy a Tax for that use, and provide

1 Chron. 1. 26. seq.

for the neceſſary Expences of the Workmen; it is very remarkable, that we do not read in the Scriptures, that any of thoſe Kings that introduced Foreign Service among the Jews, did ever attempt to force by Threats, or otherwiſe, their Subjects to ſuch a Worſhip, but rather by ſeveral Allurements enticed them to follow their Example, and that ſuch as were thus ſeduced, did, as well as their King, receive Condign Puniſhment from God, accordingly; And that ſuch among the Jews as abhorred this Idolatry, ought not to be look'd upon as Rebellious Subjects upon that ſcore, but as Perſons that did bear this Publick Calamity with Patience. And, as thoſe Kings, that Aboliſhed Idolatry and Foreign Worſhip amongſt the Jews, are highly extolled in the Scriptures, ſo thoſe Impious Kings, that were the Authors of this Idolatry, were by the high Rank, they bore in the State, exempted from the ordinary Puniſhment, which according to God's Ordinance, was elſe to be inflicted upon all others, that ſhould attempt to introduce Idolatry. Laſtly, another remarkable Obſervation may be made as to the Jewiſh Religion; that, whereas there was ſo ſtrict an Unity betwixt the State and Religion, that the latter might juſtly be called the Foundation Stone of the firſt, and God had expreſly enjoyned them an exact obſervance of it, under forfeiture of the quiet Poſſeſſion of that Country, where their Commonwealth was Eſtabliſhed; the Felicity of the State, depended abſolutely from the due obſervance of that Religion, and the Civil Magiſtrates were to take

cogni-

cognizance of all such Matters, as might prove either dangerous or destructive to it; as it may plainly appear by the Law of God, prescribed in this behalf, in the Books of *Moses*.

§. 11. The Christian Religion differs in many points from that of the Jews; not only because it represents our Saviour to us, as he has already appeared upon Earth, and thereby has freed us from these many Ceremonies and Sacrifices, which were so many Emblems of his future coming amongst us; but also, because the Christian Religion is, by God's peculiar Providence, endowed with such Qualifications, that it ought, and may be received by all Nations without Prejudice, and consequently deserves the Name of an Universal Religion; whereas the Divine Worship of the Jews, was so adapted to that State, as scarce to be suitable to any other, being unaccessible to any other Nation but their own; the Christian Religion on the other hand, is now-a-days not tyed up to a certain Place or Temple, but every where *Men may pray, lifting up holy hands.* 1 Tim. 2. 8. We need not appear before God with sumptuous Sacrifices; but those Sacrifices which are acceptable to God, are to be purchased without Gold or Silver. Neither is the Ministry of the Gospel granted as a peculiar Priviledge to one particular Nation or Family, but the Christians in general are called *Priests before God*, and Apocal. 1. 6. 5. 10. no body is excluded from that Ministry, provided he be endued with the necessary Qualifications; except that St. *Paul* forbids Women to Teach. 1 Tim. 11. 12. Lastly, Each Nation has an equal share in the Christian Religion; neither can

The Genius of the Christian Religion is quite different from that of the Jews.

any of them claim a peculiar Right or Prerogative before others, every one having equal ſhare in the Merits of Chriſt. *Here is neither Jew nor Greek, here is neither Bond nor Free, neither Male nor Female; for ye are all one in Chriſt Jeſus.* There is *neither Greek nor Jew, Circumciſion, or Uncircumciſion, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond nor Free, but Chriſt is all, and in all.* But becauſe the Chriſtian Religion is not like the Jewiſh, adapted to one particular State, that had its riſe at the ſame time with this Religion, but was introduced after Civil Societies were erected throughout the World. The main point now in queſtion is, Whether after this Religion has been introduced, it has altered the Nature of Civil Societies, or the Rights of Sovereigns; and whether by its eſtabliſhment a new ſort of Government, ſeparate and independent from the Civil Power, has been introduced? Or, which is the ſame in effect. Whether the Church is to be conſidered as a State ſeparate and independent from the Civil Government, which ought to be Governed and Maintained by Human Force and Power? By the Word State, we underſtand a conſiderable number of People, who being joyned in one Society, independent from another, are Governed by their own Laws and Governors.

Gal. 3. 28. Coloſſ. 3. 11. *Vide* 1 Tim. 11. 14.

How Moſes behaved himſelf when he laid the Foundation of the Jewiſh Commonwealth.

§. 12. To trace the very Original of this point, the Behaviour of *Moſes*, the Founder both of the Jewiſh Church and State, muſt be taken into due conſideration; and how far different Jeſus Chriſt, the Saviour of Mankind, and Founder of the Chriſtian Church, ſhewed himſelf

himself in his Behaviour, from *Moses*. *Moses* was commanded by God, to deliver the Posterity of the Patriarchs from the Bondage of *Ægypt*, and to lead them according to God's Covenant with them, into *Canaan*, the Land of Promise; where he was to Erect a New Commonwealth, and to Establish their Ecclesiastical and Civil Laws at the same time. The better therefore to Establish his Authority not only amongst his Country-men, (over whom he had no other Lawful Jurisdiction) but also to gain Credit with the *Ægyptians*, that hitherto had kept the others under their Jurisdiction; he did, by his Extraordinary and Miraculous Deeds, give them most evident Demonstrations of his Divine Commission, and of a secret Correspondence with God Almighty. These Miracles struck such a Terror into the Ægyptian King, that his Obstinacy was at last overcome; who else, in all likelihood, would not have parted, upon easie terms, with so vast a number of his Subjects; Their number being sufficient to make up a new and strong People: And the Jews moved by his Miracles, and in acknowledgment of the Benefits received from his Hands, and being sensible that *God stood by him in all his Undertakings*, willingly received him for their Prince and General. As long as he lived he exercised this Princely Authority in the highest degree; for, he did Constitute amongst them both their Ecclesiastical and Civil Laws, and Ordained and Established their whole Government. He used to Administer Justice, Inflict Punishments upon those that were found Criminal, he had the Power of Constituting

tating Magistrates and others, that were to aid and assist him in his Office, and those that attempted against his Authority, he made sensible of their Folly, by inflicting most severe Punishments upon them. There was all that time no occasion for the levying of Taxes upon the People, except what was requisite for the Maintainance and Ornament of their Publick Religious Service. He was very watchful for the Preservation of the People, and if they were Attack'd by their Enemies, used to defend them by Force of Arms. Lastly, when he knew that he was shortly to depart this Life, he Constituted his Successor, who was to be their General, and under whose Conduct they were to be put into Possession of the so long desired Land of Promise; from whence it is very evident, that *Moses*, as long as he lived, bore the Office of a Prince, and that he was the Founder of the State or Commonwealth of the Jews.

What, on the other hand our Saviour did when he established his Church.

§. 13. But if we look upon our Saviour Jesus Christ, he acted in a quite different manner; from whence it was very evident, that his intention was not to Erect a new State here upon Earth. 'Tis true, he gained to himself a great deal of Credit and Authority by his Miracles; but these were no terrifying Miracles, or such as ever proved injurious to any. So, when his Disciples would have persuaded him, to command fire to come down from Heaven, and consume those that refused to receive him, they met with a severe Rebuke. The main Demonstrations he used to give them of his Divinity, always tended to the benefit

Luke 9. 54 55.

of

of others, and the Miracles performed by him, were of such a nature, as must needs attract the love and favour of all Men; and at the same time were apparent and convincing Proofs of his Divinity, not any thing less than a Divine Power being able to cause a new Motion or Alteration in the course of Nature, without Natural means. For *he went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil.* All which had not the least Relation towards the laying of the Foundation of a new State. He had some Disciples, but these were few in number, unarmed, poor, of a mean Profession and Condition, and of so little Authority, that it was impossible for them to make the least pretension of setting up a State of their own, or of raising any Commotions or Disturbances in another State. And when the multitude, in acknowledgment of the benefits received by his Doctrine and Miracles, would at several times have proclaimed him King, he absconded and made his escape. The principal Care he took of his Followers, was to instruct them by his Doctrine, from whence they were called Disciples, and they in return, used to give him the Name of Master or Teacher. Neither did he Constitute any new Laws, (at least not any that could be supposed to have any reference towards the Establishment of a new State) but the Antient Law, as far as it was given to Mankind in general, was explained, and the People exhorted to a due observance of it. He did never execute the Office of a Judge, nay he refused to be an Arbitrator, to convince the World that his coming

Acts 10. 38.

Luke 12. 13, 14.

Joh. 8 11.

coming was intended for no such purpose. Lastly, he did himself pay Taxes to others; and, tho' it was in his Power to prevent it, suffered himself to be Judged and Executed. All which is altogether inconsistent with the Nature and Office of a Tempor al Sovereign.

Christ did not Constitute a new People.

§. 14. This will appear more clearly to us, if we duly consider that Christ never acted according to the Rules of those that intend to lay the Foundation of a new State. For, their principal and first care is to Constitute a new People, that is, to bring over to their side such a number of People, as are willing and sufficient to be joyned under one Civil Government. This Multitude of People is either Assembled at once, and drawn out of another Commonwealth, as *Moses* did; or by degrees brought over out of other Commonwealths, as *Romulus* gathered the People of *Rome*. But it is easie to be seen, that our Saviour's Intention was of a quite different Nature. His Disciples were not so many in number, as to have the least resemblance with a Nation or People, neither were they instructed in those matters, which have the least relation to the Establishment of a new Commonwealth. Their dependance from him was not near the same, which Subjects have of their Prince, having never sworn Allegiance to him; but only as Disciples from their Master, being influenced by the Love and Admiration they had both for his Person and Doctrine. Sometimes a great Multitude of People would flock about him, but these only came to hear him Preach, and to be Spectators of his Miracles, which being done, they return'd to their respective

John 6. 66, 67, 68.

ſpective homes. And Chriſt never ſhewed the leaſt inclination to command over, or to withdraw them from the Obedience due to their Sovereigns. Laſtly, when the time of his Death approached, his moſt truſty and particular Friends and Followers abſconded, and durſt not as much as make any publick appearance. When we therefore ſpeak of Chriſtians, we do not underſtand a certain Nation or People, ſubject to any particular Government, but in general, all ſuch, as make profeſſion of a certain Doctrine or Religion.

Chriſt had no Territories belonging to him.

§. 15. One of the main points which thoſe that intend to Eſtabliſh a new Commonwealth ought to take care of, is how to acquire conſiderable Territories, where their new Subjects may ſettle themſelves and their Fortunes. So, *Moſes*, when he ſaw it not fecible to ſet up the Jewiſh Commonwealth within the bounds of *Ægypt*, led them into the Deſert, and through ſuch places as were not ſubject to any particular Government; till ſuch time, that they Conquered the Land of *Canaan*, and rooted out its Antient Inhabitants. Neither were the Jews, before they were put into Poſſeſſion of this Country, the leſs free, for they were then a Nation independent from any Foreign Power; and though they ſometimes marched upon the Borders of other Princes, nevertheleſs were they not, during that time, ſubject to their Juriſdiction; partly, becauſe no body ever laid any particular claim to thoſe Territories, or if ſome of them did, they marched through them like Soldiers of Fortune, ready to make good their Pretences and Titles to theſe Lands, by

by the edge of their Swords. But Christ did say, of himself, *That he was so poor, as he had* Mat. 8. 20. *not where to lay his head.* He was always so far from attempting to acquire any Possessions or Territories, or to encourage his Followers to do it, that he rather chose to live during the whole course of his life in other Territories and under Civil Jurisdiction.

Christ did not exercise the Office of a Prince.

§. 16. There are a great many other remarkable Circumstances from whence it may plainly be inferred, that Christ never did, nor intended, to appear, as a Prince, here upon Earth. When the Mother of the Sons of *Zebedeus*, begged of our Saviour, that her Sons might be prefer'd to the Chiefest Dignities in the Kingdom of Christ, he rebuked her for her ignorance, and Prophesied to his Followers a very slender share of outward Splendor and temporal Preferments, but abundance of Persecution; nay, he plainly told and enjoyned his Disciples, that they should not strive for Pre-eminency over one another, as Temporal Princes do. *It shall*, says he, *not be so amongst you*, ordering them to live in an equal and Brother-like degree with one another. And, to remove, by his own Example, all remnants of Pride, he in their presence, did abase himself to that degree of Servitude, as to wash the feet of St. *Peter*. Lastly, it is of great Consequence at the first Establishment of a new Commonwealth, that its Founder be long-lived, that thereby he may be enabled, to lay a more solid Foundation of the new Government. For this reason it was that *David*'s Soldiers would not any longer suffer him to expose his Person

Vid. Mat. 20. 20.

Luke 20. 26.

John 13. 9, 10.

Person in Battel, lest *the light of Israel should be extinguished*; the loss of his own Person being esteemed more than of a great many thousands. But our Saviour did surrender himself voluntarily to death, after he had scarce four years appeared in Publick, and that without appointing a Successor, who was to exercise any Power or Authority over those, that followed his Doctrine, 2 Sam. 21. 17.

§. 17. As now Christ, during his abode here upon Earth, did not make the least appearance or outward shew, resembling the greatness of Temporal Princes; and, as out of all his Actions there cannot be gathered the least thing, which may prove his intention to have been to erect a new State or Commonwealth; so it is sufficiently apparent, that, during the whole course of his publick Conversation on Earth, he employed all his Time and Labour in publishing the Word of God. So that in the Quality of a Doctor or Teacher, he appeared to the Eyes of all the World; whereas his Office of being the Saviour of Mankind, was at that time understood, only by such, as were capable of applying the Antient Oracles of the Prophets to his Person. Furthermore, our Saviour to establish and shew his Authority, made use of such Miracles, as might be evident proofs of his Divine Power, partly, because the Antient Ceremonies which were to be abolished, were first ordained by God's special Command; partly, because the principal Heads of his Doctrine were surpassing all Human Understanding. But, as for his way of Teaching, it *But that of a Doctor or Teacher.* John 1. 29.

it was plain, and free from Vanity, without all affectation, wherein appeared nothing which juſtly might cauſe the leaſt ſuſpicion of fictitious Worſhip. Notwithſtanding his Doctrine appeared thus in her Native and Pure Simplicity, yet, ſo powerful were its Charms, that all what Human Art, Dexterity, Eloquence has been able to invent of that kind, if compared to the ſolid Expeſſions of our Saviour, is only ſuperficial and inſipid. Neither do we find, that he made uſe of any outward means to promote his Doctrine. He did not call to his aid the Power and Authority of Civil Magiſtates, to force People to receive his Words. The Word was there, *He that can take, let him take it.* And how often do we read that he exclaimed to them, *He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear.* It was not God Almighty's pleaſure to pull People head-long into Heaven, or to make uſe of the new French way of Converting them by Dragoons; But, he has laid open to us the way of our Salvation, in ſuch a manner, as not to have quite debarr'd us from our own choiſe; ſo, that if we will be refractory, we may prove the cauſe of our own Deſtruction. Neither, did it pleaſe Almighty God to inveigle Mankind by the Allurements of Profit and Temporal Pleaſures, but rather to foretel thoſe, that ſhould follow his Doctrine, nothing but Adverſities, Calamities, Perſecutions and all ſorts of Afflictions; reſerving the chiefeſt Reward till after this Life, where alſo ſuch as had neglected his Doctrine, were to receive condign Puniſhment. This is the moſt evident

Mat. 11. 15. 13. 9. 43. Luke 8. 8 14. 35

Proof

Proof that can be given of the intrinsick Value and extraordinary Worth of the Christian Doctrine, the natural Constitution of Mankind in general, being such as to be chiefly moved with those Objects that are present and affect our Senses; whereas those things that are represented to our Minds at a distance, are but faintly received, and often meet with dubious Interpretations. It is worth our Observation, what Method Christ made use of in his Doctrine, *viz.* That *he taught as one having Authority*, as it is expressed by *Matth.* 7. 29. not as the Scribes, that is; he had no recourse to the Authority and Traditions of their Antient *Rabbi's*, so as to set up for an Interpreter of their antient Laws, but he spoke Lord-like, and as a Legislator, who had a lawful Authority belonging to himself, to propose his Doctrine. It is my Will and Command, who is it that dare gain-say me? And in this one point only Christ exercised his Regal Power, as well as his Office of Teaching, when he promised great and ample Rewards to all such, as should receive his Doctrine, threatening with Eternal Damnation all those that should refuse to hearken to it. *He that believed not, is condemned already*, are his Words; quite contrary as it is with other speculative Sciences, the Ignorance of which makes no body liable to Punishments. And, in this Sense is to be taken what is related of our Saviour by St. *John*; The reason why the Jews were so bent to the Destruction of Christ, was, because they abominated his Doctrine; nor would they acknowledge him for the same Messias, which was promised so

John 3. 18.

18. 37.

long before. But having at that time no Criminal Jurisdiction belonging to themselves, they were oliged to forge Treason and Rebellion against him, as if his design was to make himself King of the Jews. Jesus therefore being examined by *Pilate* concerning this Accusation, *did not deny it, but witnessed a good Confession*, viz. *That his Kingdom was not of this World*, which is as much as to say; His Kingdom was not like those of Temporal Princes, who exercise Acts of Sovereignty over their Subjects. For, if he had pretended to the same Prerogatives, he might have commanded his Servants, not his timerous Disciples, but those strong Legions of Angels, who always stand ready to his Command, to protect their Lord from falling into the Hands of *Pilate*. And when *Pilate* replied, *That he then professed himself to be a King*, he answered, That *he was King, but a King of Truth, and that for this cause he came into the World, that he should bear witness unto Truth*. *Pilate*, by what Christ had professed, soon understood that this matter did not fall under his Cognizance, and therefore answered, *What is Truth*? As if he would have said, if nothing else can be objected against you, but that you make profession of Truth, I have no further business with you; for Truth is not subject to any Temporal Jurisdiction. Neither did the Laws of the Roman Empire, wherein so many Nations were comprehended, take any Cognizance at that time, of the various Opinions of their Subjects in matters of Religion, as it plainly appears out of the *Acts*, and

1 Tim. 6. 13.

Joh. 18. 37.

16, 14, 15, 24, 19, 26, 31, 32.

and out of the Apology of *Athenagoras*. It was for this reaſon that *Pilate* would have diſcharged him, if he had not at laſt thought it more convenient, to appeaſe the rage of the Jews by Sacrificing him, though Innocent, to their Fury. But after Chriſt had once made this open Confeſſion, he refuſed to make any further anſwer to *Pilate*, being ſenſible that *Pilate* was not deſirous to be inſtructed in this Truth. The Kingdom of Chriſt therefore, is a Kingdom of Truth, where he, by the force of Truth, brings over our Souls to his Obedience; and this Truth has ſuch powerful Charms, that the Kingdom of Chriſt needs not to be maintained by the ſame forcible means and Rules, by which Subjects muſt be kept in Obedience to the Civil Powers. And for the ſame reaſon it is, that there need not be eſtabliſhed a particular State, in order to propagate and preſerve Truth, no more, than it is neceſſary, to ſet up a ſeparate Commonwealth, where Philoſophy and other Sciences are to be taught. For, it is the true Genius of Truth, and ſuch her intrinſick vertue, as to be convincing in it ſelf, provided ſhe be but re, preſented in her genuine Shape; and the fruits, which ſhe produces for the benefit of Mankind, be dexterouſly propoſed to the view of the World. But the divine Truth has, beyond all others, this particular prerogative, that by vertue, and with the aſſiſtance of God's Grace our Minds are inſenſibly drawn into a Belief of thoſe things, that otherwiſe ſeem to ſurpaſs human Underſtanding.

The Apostles propagated the Doctrine of Christ.

§. 18. Christ, after having withdrawn himself from Human Conversation, did Substitute in this Kingdom of Truth his Apostles, but not in the same Rank with himself; not as Kings, but as Ministers and Heralds, to publish his Doctrine. *As my Father, said he,* Joh. 20. 21. *had sent me, even so send I you.* But how had the Father sent him? *viz. To preach the* Isa 61. 1. 5. Luk. 4. 18. *Gospel to the Poor, to heal the broken Hearted, to preach Deliverance to the Captives*, as it is expressed by *Isaiah* and St. *Luke*; So, that the Title of King, of Truth, was a peculiar Title, Mat 23. 10 appertaining to Christ alone. He tells them, Mat. 28. 20. *Be you not called Masters, for one is your Master, Christ.* And their Calling was, to Teach all Nations, to observe all things whatsoever Christ had Commanded. St. *Paul* called his Function *a Ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testifie the Gospel of the Grace* Act. 20. 24 Ephes. 4. 11. *of God.* The Apostles had the first Rank among Christ's Followers, but the word Apostle implies as much as a Missionary, or one that is sent by another. So, that they had no other Power or Authority from themselves, to Teach their Doctrine, but to Instruct others in what they had received from Christ. And, when, after the Death of our Saviour, they were quite dejected, and put into a panick Fear, He, by sending the Holy Ghost did so comfort and strengthen them, that they appeared in Publick, and inspite of the *Jews*, and all the Danger that threatned them, 1 Cor. 14. 5. preached the Doctrine of the Gospel. But the diversity of Languages being a main obstacle towards the spreading abroad of any Doctrine,

Doctrine, the Apostles were by the Holy Ghost upon *Whitsunday*, Endowed with the Gift of speaking various Languages, to enable them, to bring the Nations into one Union of Faith; It being otherwise a Maxim of State received by those that intend to lay the Foundation of a new Commonwealth, to take care, that no more than one Language be used among their Subjects. It is also worth our taking Notice of, that among those Languages which the Apostles spoke, there were Languages of some Nations, that were then Subjects to the *Parthian Empire*, which was at that time in the same degree of Enmity and Hatred with the *Romans*, as may now a-days be observed betwixt the *Germans* and *Turks*. Notwithstanding this mortal Hatred betwixt these several Nations, and the difficulties which were to be surmounted in keeping a Correspondence betwixt them, which could not but be a main Obstacle to their being ever united under one Head or Government, the Union of Faith was introduced among them, under the Kingdom of Truth.

The Apostles had received their Power of teaching from God alone, without any dependance from any Temporal Power.

§. 19. The Apostles had nevertheless much more Authority for the exercising of their Function, than others, who profess Human Sciences or Doctrines; For, these cannot pretend to any lawful Authority of Teaching, in publick, unless with Consent, or at least Connivance of the Higher Powers, who may put a stop to them at Pleasure. But the Case is quite different with the Apostles, who having received their Commission of Teaching from Christ, the same cannot be annul-

led by any Civil Power, ſo, as to oblige them either to be ſilent, or to alter their Doctrine, when commanded; neither can they be eſteemed diſobedient or rebellious, if they refuſe, in this Point, to follow the Commands of Civil Magiſtrates. It is very remarkable what Chriſt ſpoke to his Apoſtles by way of Preface, when he was juſt going to put them into Poſſeſſion of their Office, Theſe were his Words: *All Power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth.* And that this Power might not be miſtaken for a Temporal Authority, as exerciſed by Sovereigns over their Subjects, but to be underſtood of the Power of leading Mankind, and ſhewing them the true Way to Salvation, plainly appears out of our Saviour's Words, when he ſpeaks thus concerning himſelf to his heavenly Father: *As thou haſt given him power over all Fleſh, that he ſhould give eternal Life to as many as thou haſt given him. And this is eternal Life, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.* And in St. *Luke: He that heared you, heared me, and he that deſpiſed you, deſpiſed me; and he that deſpiſed me, deſpiſed him that ſent me.* The holy Apoſtles therefore could not by any Civil Power on Earth be abſolved from this Command of Preaching the Doctrine of Chriſt throughout the World, and Baptizing ſuch as received this Doctrine. They were inſtructed with the Gift of doing Miracles, as a Proof of their Authority, and Verity of their Doctrine, which being now ſufficiently propogated and received by ſo many, theſe Miracles are become uſeleſs: Like it is the

Mat. 28. 18.

S. Joh. 17. 2, 3.

10, 16.

Cuſtom

Custom in some Conntries, that new Laws are published, under the Sound of Trumpets, which is never repeated after the first Promulgation. They having then received their Authority from Christ, it was a vain Exprobration which was made to St. *Paul* by the *Athenians*, when they said: *What will this Babler say*? Neither could they be justly punished, because they went about to abolish the antiently received Rites and Ceremonies; And when they were commanded to desist from spreading their Doctrine, they might legally refuse to be obedient in this Case; For, *they ought to obey God rather than Men*; Nay, they were rather to undergo corporal Punishment, than to renounce the Doctrine of Christ. And those Princes, that violently opposed the Christian Doctrine, are so far from having exercised a legal Civil Authority, that they have rather made themselves guilty of a most enormous Crime against the Divine Majesty, by violating his Legats or Ministers, it being sufficiently known, that publick Ministers, sent by Temporal Princes, are esteemed inviolable.

Act. 17. 18.

Acts 4. 19. 5. 29.

Mat. 10. 28, 32, 33

The Apostles never assumed a Power to Command.

§. 20. Besides this Power of Preaching the Gospel, (even in opposition to any Civil Command) there is nothing to be met withal in the whole Apostolical Doctrine, that has the least resemblance of Command or force. 'Tis not to be denied, but that sometimes Teaching cannot so well be performed without something of Force or Command, especially among young People; But this has its off-spring from the Paternal Authority, and is from h nce derived unto others. But the Apo-

ſtles were to Teach whole Nations, ſuch as were independent from others, and paſt all School Diſcipline. And what could one ſingle Body, or perhaps two, and that without Weapons, pretend to do by Force againſt whole Nations and Commonwealths? It was therefore; That the Apoſtle ſaid: *The Weapons of our Warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of Strong-holds, caſting down Imaginations, and every high thing, that exalted it ſelf againſt the Knowledge of God; and bringing into captivity every Thought to the obedience of Chriſt.* And theſe Weapons are more plainly deſcribed in the foregoing 6 *Chap.* to be, *Patience, Tribulations, Neceſſities, Diſtreſſes, Stripes, Impriſonments, Labours, Faſtings, Watchings, Pureneſs, Knowledge, Kindneſs, the Holy Ghoſt, unfeigned Love; the Word of Truth, the Power of God, the Armour of Righteouſneſs,* and ſuch like, as may more at large appear out of ſeveral places, eſpecially out of the Epiſtle to the *Epheſ.* 6. 11, out of the 2*d.* to the *Corinth.* 8. 8, 9, 7. to the *Coloſſ.* 1. 23, 25; and out of the 2*d.* to the *Theſſal.* 3. 12, 14, 15. 'Tis true, in the Parallel of the great Supper, the Maſter of the Feaſt orders his Servants, to go out, and compel them to come into his Houſe, which is as much to ſay, as to oblige them to come in, but not by forcible Means or Threatnings; or to pull them in by Head and Shoulders, but in ſuch a manner as was ſuitable to an invitation to ſo great a Feaſt, by Prayers and Exhortations, and making them ſenſible of the Majeſty and Greatneſs both of the Maſter and the Feaſt. In the ſame manner

2 Cor. 10. 4. 5.

2 Cor. 6. 4. ſeq.

Luk. 14. 23.

manner as St. *Paul* expreſſes it: *We are Ambaſſadours for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us; we pray you in Chriſts ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.* And, what can be more evident, than that Ambaſſadours never pretend to any Authority over thoſe, unto whom they are ſent, but that their Negotiations ought to be accompliſhed by force of Reaſon and Perſwaſions. The word alſo of *feeding*, which is uſed by St. *John* implies nothing of Command, but only the due Adminiſtration of Food; eſpecially, ſince our Saviour told expreſly to *Peter*, *Feed my ſheep*, not thine; leſt he ſhould be apt to imagine by the ſaid words, he had liberty given him to uſe his Flock according to his own Diſcretion; But, to make him ſenſible, he was bound up to the ſame Rules, which the Patriarch *Jacob* had formerly preſcribed to himſelf. Laſtly, our Saviour is very plain in this Point, when he ſays: And *whoſoever ſhall not receive you, nor hear your Words, when you depart out of that Houſe or City, ſhake off the Duſt of your Feet, leaving them to receive condign Puniſhment for this Contempt of the Goſpel, at the Day of Judgment.* This was actually performed by St. *Paul* at *Antiocha*, and *Corinth*. But thoſe Rules which are preſcribed in the 1 Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, Chap. 11. from *v.* 2, to 23, 23, 24, and 1 *Corinth.* Chap. 14; as alſo in *Tim.* 2. 8 *Ver. Chap.* 5. 9 *Ver.* and ſome other paſſages of the ſame nature, do not imply any Command or Legiſlative Power, but are only Moral Precepts, and Points of Doctrine.

2 Cor. 5. 20.

Chap. 21.

Gen. 31. 38, 39, 40.

Mat. 10. 14. 23.

Acts 13. 50, 51.

18, 6.

§. 21. But

Whether the power of Teaching does indirectly imply any Command.

§. 21. But it may perhaps be objected, That the Apoſtles and their Succeſſors, might at leaſt by indirect ways and means, exerciſe an Authority over Chriſtians, *viz.* by denying them the Doctrine of the Goſpel, which ſhews Men the way to Salvation, unleſs they would in other Matters alſo ſubmit themſelves to their Authority. For, who would not rather ſubmit to any thing than to be deprived of that Doctrine, which leads us to Heaven, and frees us from eternal Puniſhment? But it cannot in the leaſt be ſuppoſed, that ſuch Extortions could ever enter into the Apoſtles Thoughts, who joyfully gave for nothing, what they had received for nothing, and judged it a heinous Offence in *Simon*, who pretended to make a Trade of the Goſpel. St. *Paul* ſays: *Though I preach the Goſpel, I have nothing to glory of, for Neceſſity is laid upon me; yea, wo is unto me, if I preach not the Goſpel.* Neither do I ſee, which way they could have made their market by the Goſpel. For, what is not underſtood, is not valued; if therefore they would raiſe in the People a deſire to the Goſpel, it muſt of neceſſity be firſt taught them. Neither is there any Reaſon to ſuppoſe, that the ſame Men, who rather would looſe their Lives than neglect their Divine Commiſſion, ſhould be guilty of ſo hainous a Crime. And the Doctrine of the Goſpel, being now a-days ſufficiently ſpread abroad, it would be in vain for the Clergy of one Province or Commonwealth, to deny the Doctrine of the Goſpel to its Inhabitants, in caſe they would not comply with their Demands; ſince, if they ſhould perſiſt

1 Cor. 9. 16.

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in their Folly, there would not be wanting ſuch as would ſupply their Places without reluctancy. Neither did Chriſt abſolutely commit his Doctrine to the ſole Management of the Prieſts, in ſuch a manner, as by Tradition to be tranſplanted from one to another; but, he ordered it to be put in Writing, not to be kept cloſe up by any one certain Colledge or Society, who were inveſted with a particular Prerogative to look into it, like it was at *Rome*, with the *Sybilline* Oracles; and granted a general Priviledge for every Body to peruſe it, and to inſtruct themſelves in the Chriſtian Doctrine, and in ſuch other Points as belonged to the Miniſtry of the Goſpel. But if a foreign Prieſt ſhould attempt to forbid the exerciſe of Religious Worſhip in another Commonwealth, ſcarce any body, unleſs quite prepoſſeſſed with Superſtition, would make the leaſt account of it. The *Venetian* Commonwealth has given us a notable inſtance of this Nature in our Age; For, tho' the *Venetians* are *Roman Catholicks*, nevertheleſs did they oblige their Prieſts to exerciſe the Miniſterial Function, in ſpite of the Pope's Commands to the contrary.

Whether the power of Abſolution imply's any right to a Sovereignty?

§. 22. It ſeems to be a Matter of the greateſt Conſequence, and therefore the more to be taken notice of, when it is ſaid: That our Saviour *did give the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven to St. Peter*, and the reſt of his Apoſtles; ſo, that, *whatſoever they ſhould bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven; and whatſoever they ſhould looſen on Earth, ſhall be looſened in Heaven.* The whole Matter, duely examined, appears to be of the higheſt moment, *viz.* to have

Mat. 16. 19. & Joh. 20. 23.

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the Power of excluding Sinners from the Kingdom of Heaven, and of admiting such as are freed by their Absolution; For what is it, that may not be obtained from a Sinner in this case, especially if the Priest refuse him Absolution, unless he promises a blind Obedience to his Demands? It ought therefore to be taken into serious consideration, what is the true meaning of this Metaphorical Locution, *viz.* The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; since the same admits of divers Explications in the holy Scripture. In the *Rev.* 1. 18. the Son of God says of himself, That *he has the Keys of Hell and of Death*, which is explained by some, that he has the Power of inflicting Punishment, as if he would say: *I have power to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell*; as it is expressed in St. *Matthew* 10. 28. Tho' by this also might be understood, the power of delivering from Death and Hell, and to destroy the force of Death and Hell. It is also spoke of the *Scribes*, That *they have the Key of Knowledge*, which is by some applied to their Function of Teaching Wisdom to others. Tho' this may also be understood from the holy Scripture it self, the true Spring of Knowledge and Wisdom, the Interpretation of which did in a most peculiar manner belong to their Function. In the Book of *Revelation*, the Son of God is said *to have the Key of David, that he opened, and no Man shutteth, and shutted, and no man opened.* And in the 22th *Chapter* of *Isaiah*, it is said of *Eliakim*, the Son of *Hilkiah*; That *the Key of the House of David shall be laid upon his Shoulder; so, that he shall open, and none shall*

What is to be understood by the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Luk. 11. 52

3. 7. 9. 1. 20. 1.

v. 22.

ſhall ſhut; and he ſhall ſhut, and none ſhall open. Where the word, *Key*, cannot be taken for an abſolute or deſpotick Power, but for a Miniſterial Function; like to that of a Steward, ſuch a one as St. *Paul* had profeſſed himſelf, and his Fellow Apoſtles. Out of theſe ſeveral places, if duely compared, this general Aſſertion may be made, that, to have the Keys of a certain thing, is as much as to ſay, to have the means to attain, or to come to it. But how far theſe Means are at our diſpoſal, and what uſe ought to be made of them, muſt be gathered out of other Circumſtances. 1 Cor. 4. 1.

§. 23. Furthermore, it is to be conſidered, That the uſe of theſe Keys is appropriated to the binding and forgiving of Sins: For as ſoon as our Sins are taken away, (or which is the ſame in effect) if our Sins are forgiven, (other Means of Salvation being not neglected) the Kingdom of Heaven is open to us. But as long as the Sins remain upon us, and produce their pernicious Effects, the Kingdom of Heaven is ſhut up againſt us, nothing of unclean being to enter there. If therefore a true Judgment is to be given, of what ſhare of Power the Apoſtles had in forgiving, and retaining of Sins, a due enquiry muſt be made, of what is to be underſtood, by forgiving and retaining of Sins? He, that does an unjuſt Act, commits an Offence both againſt the Legiſlator, whoſe Authority is thereby voilated, and againſt him, who is damnified by it. Beſides this, there are ſome Offences of ſuch a Nature, as to touch whole Societies, as far as their Reputation is thereby impair'd, the Crime committed *What is to underſtood by abſolving from Sins.*

mitted by one of their Members, being oftentimes attributed to the whole Body. It is therefore from the Damage, which the Legiſlator, a ſingle Perſon, or whole Society, receive by ſuch an Offence, that an Action lies, againſt the Offender; In the ſame manner as a Creditor has a right to ſue his Debtor for a Debt, contracted with him. In which reſpect it is, that Sins are often called Debts in the holy Scripture. But, in this double, or ſometimes, threefold Action, which ariſes from one Offence committed againſt ſeveral Perſons, each is to be conſidered as ſeparate from the other; ſo, that, tho' one Action be taken off, the other remains notwithſtanding this, in full force: For, as God does not remit Sins, without Satisfaction given from the Offender, to the offended Perſon; So, tho' the Offender be reconciled to the offended, nevertheleſs is he obliged to ſeek for Remiſſion of his Sin by God; And, if the Offence be hainous, and of ſuch a Nature, as to be ſcandalous to a whole Society, he ought there, alſo to endeavour his Reconcilation, by begging forgiveneſs of them. Therefore, to remit a Sin, is the ſame Thing, as to remit an Action, or to releaſe one from an Action, which the offended Party had againſt the Offender. And he, that has an Action againſt another, by reaſon of ſome Offence committed againſt him, may properly be ſaid, to have Power to remit that Offence or Sin, as far as his Action reaches. For, God himſelf does not make uſe of his uncontrouled Power of remitting of Sins; ſo, as without any further Reſpect, and by his mere Pleaſure

Mat. 5 23. 24.

Pleaſure to remit their Sins to ſome, and to puniſh others. For, to pardon Offences promiſcuouſly, without any further regard but bare Pleaſure, is in effect to render Laws ineffectual; and Laws are made to no purpoſe by him, who at the ſame time grants a Licenſe of Treſpaſſing againſt them. And, becauſe it was beyond all Human Power to give Satisfaction to God Almighty for our Offences, our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt has made uſe of a moſt wonderful Moderation betwixt Juſtice and Mercy, in giving due Satisfaction in his own Perſon; So, that, whoever by the Faith appropriates the ſame to himſelf, thereby obtains Remiſſion of his Sins from God. And, as to that part, which belongs to Men to forgive, God has commanded them not to be rigorous, if the Offender beg forgiveneſs, becauſe every one of us muſt every day expect Forgiveneſs of his Sins from God Almighty; and we all commit ſometimes Offences againſt our Neighbours, who, if they would all act rigorouſly with us, our Condition would be moſt deplorable. Wherefore we ought *to forgive our Debts, as we would have others forgive us their Debts.* Neither are we to be too rigorous againſt ſuch Sinners, as have by their Offences proved ſcandalous to a whole Society, but if they ſeriouſly repent, we ought not to deny them our Pardon. It is alſo worth our further Obſervation, That the following Words; *Verily I ſay unto you, whatſoever you ſhall bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven, and whatſoever you ſhall looſen on Earth, ſhall be looſened in Heaven*, are ſpoken by Chriſt alſo of the Remiſſion of an Offence

Mat. 6. 12, 14, 15. c. 5. 25, c. 18, 25. Luke 17. 3.

Mat. 18. 18.

Offence by the Party offended; Neither does the Senſe of the preceding Words allow to apply them only to his Diſciples, they being ſpoken not only to the Apoſtles, but to the Believers in general.

Under whoſe name and authority the Apoſtles did exerciſe this power of Abſolution.

§. 24. Suppoſing then that the Apoſtles were to remit ſuch Sins as were not committed againſt them, it muſt neceſſarily follow, That they, when they remitted Sins, did it either in the name of ſuch particular Perſons, againſt whom the ſaid Sins were committed, or in the name of a whole Society, or elſe in the name of ſome (Human or Divine) Legiſlator. Now it is certain, that no body can remit another Man's lawful Action, without his order or conſent, no more than you can lawfully take away another's Right or Property; and therefore it is abſolutely neceſſary, firſt, to make our peace with the Perſon offended; without which, we ought not to ſeek for Pardon from God Almighty; at leaſt, he, that has offended ought to take firſt, a firm Reſolution, to give Satisfaction, as far as is in his Power. Chriſt ſays; *Firſt, be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.* And St. *Paul* offered to make Satisfaction to *Philemon*, for what Damage he had received from *Oneſimus*. From hence ariſes that general and common Rule: That *if Reſtitution be not made, there can be no Remiſſion of the Sin.* For, it is ridiculous, and a contradiction in it ſelf, to profeſs to God Almighty a true Repentance for an unjuſt Act, and at the ſame time enjoy the benefit of it. But, as for the Remiſſion of ſuch enormous Crimes as were committed againſt a whole Society, the

Mat. 5. 24. Luke 19. 8.

v. 18, 19.

Apoſtles

Apostles had their share in it, as is evident out of the 1 Epistle to the *Corinth. c.* 5. 4, 5. and *2Corinth. c.* 2. 10. *c.* 12. 29. and will be more treated of hereafter. It will be sufficient in this place to take notice, that what Authority was exercised by them in this kind, was much inferior to that power which they had received of Retaining and Forgiving of Sins. But to remit Sins in the name of those that had the Sovereign and Legislative Power in the State, did not belong to the Apostles, their Commission and Power being not to interfer with the Civil Jurisdiction, or to diminish its Prerogatives; Wherefore Civil Magistrates justly may, and do punish, Offenders according to the Laws of the Realm, notwithstanding they have made their peace with God. The only way then for the Apostles was, to forgive Sins in the Name of God, by whose Authority they had received their Commission, as is evident out of these Words: *Whatsoever you shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever you shall loosen on Earth, shall be loosened in Heaven.*

§. 25. But, if we propose to form to our selves a true Idea of the Power granted to the Apostles, when the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven were given unto them, and how far it extends it self, we must take into serious Consideration, in what manner Christ himself did remit Sins, whilst he lived among us upon Earth. This is sufficiently manifest out of several Passages in St. *Matthew*, 9. 2. *Mark*, 2. 3. *Luke*, 5. 20. *c.* 7. 47, 48, 39, 50. Where our Saviour verifies his Power of forgiving of *Of what nature this Power was*

Sins, by a Miracle, which could not but be the effect of a Divine Power. Besides this, there was no Plaintiff or Defendant, there was no open or expreſs Confeſſion of Sin; but as ſoon as Chriſt ſaw their Faith, he pronounced Remiſſion of Sin. And, if we peruſe the whole New Teſtament, it will moſt evidently appear, that neither Chriſt nor his Apoſtles did forgive Sins in a judicial way, where Crimes are firſt examined; but where the Faith was, the forgiveneſs of Sins was the immediate conſequence of it. *He that believed on him*, ſays St. *John*, *is not condemned, but he that believed not, is condemned already.* Neither is that Confeſſion (whether tacit or expreſs) which ought to precede the Remiſſion of Sins, like to thoſe Confeſſions, which in Judicial Courts are required to be made by Offenders, and are ſure to meet with deſerved Puniſhment; But it has a reſemblence to thoſe Confeſſions, that are made to Phyſicians, by ſuch of their Patients as labour under a ſecret Diſtemper, hoping thereby for Relief in their Diſeaſes. As it is expreſſed in the 32 *Pſalm*, *v.* 3, 4, 5. of *David*; Neither can true Repentance be ſuppoſed without ſuch a Confeſſion; for, how can we ask forgiveneſs either of God, or our Neighbour, whom we have offended, unleſs we confeſs and acknowledge our Error. Laſtly, it is to be obſerved, That Chriſt and his Apoſtles, during the time of Grace, here upon Earth, did not intend to ſet up a judicial Court, but to preach, and to announce repentance and forgiveneſs of Sins. But of the great Day of Judgment, it is ſaid, That God will proceed to

Chap. 3. v. 18.

Joſ. 7. 19. c. 20. 21.

Prov. 28. 13.

Judgment

Judgment in a ſolemn manner, there, *the Supream Judge will ſit upon the Throne of Judgment, there Seats are to be prepared for the Aſſeſſours, the Books are to be opened, and every one is to be judged according to his Works*; and that without Appeal: It ought alſo to be taken notice of, That, tho' we have obtained pardon for an Offence from our Neighbour, this does not always and neceſſarily imply a Pardon from God Almighty; for it, is poſſible, that, notwithſtanding a Pardon obtained from Men, God has not abſolved us from that Offence; as for inſtance, if the Offender be without true Faith, or an Hypocrite: And, on the other hand, it is poſſible that our Offences are forgiven by God, when forgiveneſs has been denied us by Men; as in caſe, our Neighbour refuſes to pardon an Offence, tho' we beg Forgiveneſs, and profer Satisfaction to be made; or, a Prieſt, being overcome by private Paſſion, ſhould deny us Abſolution; When therefore the Prieſt ſays; *Thy Sins are forgiven unto thee*, it is not always to be taken for granted, that Chriſt does then make uſe of the ſame Words; For, God alone is the Judge of our Faith, and even our Thoughts; But Men can only give their Judgment according to ſuch Circumſtances, or outward Signs, as effect our Senſes, which often prove deceitful, and far different from what we keep concealed within us. And, tho' in Civil Courts of Judicature it is ſufficient, if Judgment be given in a Caſe, according to what is proved by Evidence, notwithſtanding the ſame may be contrary to Truth; it is quite otherwiſe with God Almighty, who, Rev. 20. 12.

ſearching into the very bottom of our Hearts, cannot be deceived by Hypocriſie. And, tho the Prieſt ſhould tell thee a hundred times over and over, thy Sins are forgiven unto thee, and thou art deſtitute of Faith, it can avail thee nothing. Laſtly, it ought not to be forgotten, that, when God did give unto the Apoſtles the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, he did not thereby ſurrender all his Power of forgiving Sins, or of receiving penitent Sinners into his Favour; or did debar himſelf from making uſe of this Power, unleſs by the means of Prieſts, ſo as to reſerve only to himſelf the Supream Prerogative of remitting of Sins, in caſe of an unjuſt refuſal of the Prieſt; No, by no means; for if this were granted, it would be in vain for us to pray every day; *Forgive us our Sins.* All theſe things duely conſidered, are evident Proofs, that, when it is ſaid, that the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven were given unto the Apoſtles, it is to be underſtood from the Doctrine of the Goſpel, which treats of the remiſſion of Sins through our Faith in Chriſt; when the Apoſtles taught this Doctrine to the Believers, it was ſaid of them, that they forgave Sins, in the ſame ſenſe as they are ſaid to ſave others by Preaching the Goſpel to the Believers. And on the contrary, when they preach the Goſpel to the Unbelieving, they are ſaid to have bound them, ſo, as that they ſhall be bound in Heaven. The Apoſtles therefore, when they announced to the Believing the Grace of God and Forgiveneſs of Sins through Chriſt, did open the Gates of Heaven; and they ſhut them againſt ſuch, as,

1 Tim. 4. 16.

Joh. 3. 18.

being

being unbelieving, refuſed to accept this Doctrine. So, that, when a Miniſter of the Church applies this Doctrine of the Goſpel to one particular Perſon, he ſays thus much to him: *If thou believeſt according to thy Confeſſion, I announce and confirm unto thee Remiſſion of thy Sins, through the Merits of Chriſt; ſo, that thou mayeſt be now aſſured, that the ſame are forgiven by Chriſt in Heaven: But if thou not believeſt, thy Sins are not forgiven.* For, remiſſion of Sins is the neceſſary conſequence of Faith, even before the Abſolution is pronounced by the Prieſt; it being not left to the arbitrary Pleaſure of Men, whether to apply the gracious Doctrine of Remiſſion of Sins to a believing Perſon, or not; But, he that believes, is thereby juſtified before God, notwithſtanding he be prevented from receiving Abſolution from the Prieſt. Out of what has been ſaid, it is evident, that, according to the Intention of our Saviour, theſe Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven were not to be made uſe of for the Eſtabliſhment of a Temporal State, or to gain other Temporal Advantages. For, Chriſt ordered the Apoſtles to preach Remiſſion of Sins, and give for nothing, what they had received for nothing; but not to traffick with the Word of God. Neither did they, by preaching the Goſpel, make Men ſubject to themſelves, but to Chriſt; Nay, St. *Paul*, could not underſtand without Indignation, that ſome among the *Corinthians* would be called from him, ſome from *Apollo*, &c. 1 Cor. 1. 12, 13.

§. 26. But of what nature ſoever their Power or Function might be, the ſame was granted *Whether St. Peter had any Prerogative granted him before the reſt of the Apoſtles?*

in an equal degree to all the Apostles, so, that none of them could claim a particular Prerogative, or, at least not any right of Commanding the rest. For, if we peruse those several Passages in the holy Scripture, where the Apostolical Function was established, and conferred upon them, there are not the least footsteps of Inequality to be found among them. And that Passage *St. Luke* 22. 26, 27. Epistle to the *Galat.* 2. 9, 14. By *St. Matth.* 16. 18. which the *Romanists* make such a stir about, contains nothing, that can give any legal Pretence Superiority to St. *Peter*, and much less to the *Roman* Bishops over all the Christian Churches. St. *Peter* had in the abovementioned place made his Confession, That *Jesus was the Son of the living God.* This excellent Confession did deserve a suitable answer from Christ, who said, thou art *Peter*, as if he would say, persist in this thy Confession *Peter*; which does in no wise imply, that *Peter* should thereby have deserved those Prerogatives over the other Apostles, as the *Romanists* do pretend to. For, St. *Peter* did not make this Confession for himself only, but in the Name of all those, unto whom Christ spoke at that time. In the same manner as he spoke in the Name of the rest of the Disciples by St. *John* 6. 69. *We believe, and are sure, that thou art Christ the Son of the living God.* Neither was *Peter* the first, that made this Confession; For, before him the same had been made by *John* the Baptist, by St. *Andrew*, *Philip* and *Nathanael*. And it is no difficult Task to prove out of several passages of the holy Scripture, that none could be taken for a true

Mat. 28. 18, 19, 20. c. 23. 8. S. Joh. 20. 21, 22, 23. c. 13. 14, 15, 16.

Joh. 1. 34, 36, 42, 45, 49. Mat. 10. 32, 33. John 11 27. Acts 4. 12.

Disciple

Disciple of Christ, unless he had made this Confession; And our Saviour, to shew, of what consequence this Confession was, added these Words: *Upon this Rock I will build my Church*: Which is as much as to say, this Doctrine, that Jesus is the Son of God, is the main Foundation Stone, whereupon is to be built the mystical Edifice of the Christian Church. So, that no further inference can be made from these Words, than what is expressed to the same purpose by St. *John*, 20. 31. and in the 1 Epist. of *John*, 2. 22. *c.* 3. 20. *c.* 4 2. *viz.* That the fundamental Article of the Christian Religion is: *That Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messias, and the Son of the living God.* c. 8. 37. c. 9. 20, 22.

Whether the Power of Excommunication implies any Sovereign Right or Jurisdiction.

§. 27. It also is worth our Consideration, whether the Power of Excommunication, which was used by the Apostles, and in the Primitive Church, implies any Sovereign Authority, such as ought to be exercised in a State? Unto this we answer in the Negative; provided the same be taken according to the proper Use and End of its genuine and primitive Institution. For, that this Power may with conveniency enough, be made use of, (if misapplied) to serve an ambitious Design, and to keep the poor People in awe, is sufficiently proved by Experience. It seems to me, that there was a remarkable Difference betwixt the Excommunication of the Jews, by virtue of which they were excluded from their Synagogues, and the Excommunication used among the Primitive Christians. For, among the Jews, where the Sovereigns and the People professed one and the same Religion (which

also was entirely united with the State) it might easily happen, that the Exclusion from the Synagogue, did carry along with it several Inconveniencies in Civil Affairs, and might therefore not unjustly be considered at the same time, as a Civil Punishment; which, rendered the Offenders infamous in the Commonwealth; Especially, since, according to the Fundamental Constitution of that Government, there were several things belonging to Religion punishable by their civil Constitutions. But, it being already put beyond Question, that neither our Saviour, nor his Apostles, did ever pretend to any Civil Power; and that besides this, the Primitive Christians lived under the Jurisdiction of other Princes, how could their Excommunication, Ban, or what other sort of Ecclesiastical Censure was used among them, be supposed to have any influence upon the Civil State and Condition of the Christians; or to have been of the same nature and force (properly speaking) as Civil Punishments are? This will more plainly appear, if we examine those Passages, where this Matter is compleatly treated of in the New Testament: It is said in *Matthew* 18. 15, 16, 17. *If thy Brother shall trespass against thee, go, and tell him his Fault, between thee and him alone; If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy Brother. But, if he will not hear thee, then take with thee One or Two more, that in the mouth of two or three Witnesses every Word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church, but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a Heathen Man and a Publican.* Certainly out of this Passage, nothing

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can be inferr'd that has any relation to a Temporal Juriſdiction or Sovereignty; but barely ſhews us, how differences ought to be compoſed among Chriſtians. So St. *Paul* ordains, that we ſhall rather leave Differences to the Arbitration of a Brother, or rather take wrong, than to go to Law with a Brother before the Unbelievers, to the great ſhame of the Chriſtian Name. So, that, tho' it is elſe required from the Offender to beg the Pardon of, and offer Satisfaction to the Perſon offended; nevertheleſs, if he neglect his Duty in this Point, Chriſt commanded, that the offended Party ſhall firſt offer a Reconciliation, and try before he brings his Action againſt the Offender, whether Satisfaction for the Injury received, and a Reconciliation may not be obtained by a private Arbitration. If this prove fruitleſs, he ſays, he ought to take along with him two or three Witneſſes, to try whether they can prevail with his Adverſary to bring him to a more pliable Temper; and at the ſame time, may teſtifie, That the offended Party, did offer every thing which might tend towards a Reconciliation betwixt them; But, if after all this, he remain obſtinate, the Difference ought to be referr'd to the whole Congregation of the Believers, reſiding in that Place; (for I ſee no reaſon why by the word *Eccleſia* or Church, the *Preſbyters* only ſhould be underſtood.) But, if they alſo cannot prevail with their Authority over his Stubborneſs, let him then be unto thee like a Heathen man and Publican, unto whom his Treſpaſſes will not be remitted, becauſe he refuſes to acknowledge

1 Cor. 6. 1, 2.

Vid. Mat. 5. 40.

his

his Offence, or to give Satisfaction for it; which is as much as to say, fly his Converſation, like that of a vile Perſon; which every one may freely do, without being thereunto compelled by any Superior Power. For, that the Jews did not converſe with the Heathens and Publicans, except in Civil Affairs, is of no great force againſt us, it being certain, that the Heathens and Publicans were not ſo infamous in themſelves by any Civil Conſtitution, the Jews being at that time ſubject to the Heathens, who matter'd not their Converſation. Beſides this, it is left to every ones free Choice, whom he will admit into his familiar Converſation; and always was a certain Rule among the wiſer Sort, not to be familiar with People of a perverſed Humour, and an ill Life, whoſe Converſation every body may avoid, as he finds it moſt convenient. So, the Apoſtle bids us, to reject a Man that is a Heretick, after the firſt and ſecond Admonition, leſt we ſhould be infected with his falſe Doctrine, for which he is to expect due Puniſhment from God Almighty. Neither does that paſſage, in the 1 Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, 5. 1. and following Verſes, and in the 2 Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, 13. 2, 10. where St. *Paul* declares, that according to the Power given him, he intends to deliver the inceſtuous Perſon to Satan, (take it in what ſenſe you pleaſe) involve any Civil Juriſdiction or Command; no more, than thoſe in the 1 Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, 6. 9. *ſeq.* in the 1 *Timothy*, 1. 20. in the 2 Epiſt. of *John*, 5. 10. All which paſſages ſignifie no more, than that every body may freely decline the

Tit. 3. 10. 1 Theſ. 2. 14. 2 Pet. 2. 1. 2 Gal. 1. 8, 9.

the Converſation of ſuch People, as he thinks may be reproach, or hurtful to him, without implying a prejudice to their Reputation in Civil Affairs. So, that, by avoiding the Converſation of ill Livers, we are not obliged to retire from the World; that is, we need not be ſo ſcrupulous in avoiding ſuch Converſation, as to neglect our Duty, or other neceſſary Buſineſs appertaining to Civil Society. And in this ſenſe it is appliable as well to Chriſtians, as to Pagans, of an ill Converſation.

The Commiſſion of the Apoſtles contains nothing reſembling any Sovereign Power.

§. 28. Laſtly, if we caſt our eyes upon thoſe Inſtructions, which Chriſt gave to his Apoſtles and Diſciples, it will evidently appear, that their Commiſſion had not the leaſt relation to the Eſtabliſhment of a Sovereign State. A State cannot be without a Supream Head, who having Power to beſtow Honours and Dignities, this generally proves the occaſion of ambitious Deſigns. A State cannot be maintained without conſiderable Revenues, which entices Men to Avarice. But, if we look upon our Saviour, we ſhall find that his main Endeavour is to keep his Diſciples from ambitious Deſigns and Covetouſneſs. The Inſtruction given by Chriſt to his Diſciples in S. *Matthew* 10. when, after having endowed them with the Gift of Miracles, he ſent them, as it was, to make their firſt Tryal, among the Jews, deſerves particularly here to be taken notice of; tho' it is not to be queſtioned, but that the ſame Inſtruction remained in force for the moſt part, after they were ſent among the Gentiles. The firſt Precept in this Inſtruction

Mat. 18. 1, 2, 3, 4. c. 23 8. Mark 9. 33. Luke 9. 46. Joh. 13. 13, 14, 15, 16.

on is, That they ſhall take heed not to abuſe the Chriſtian Doctrine, and the Gift of Miracles for the heaping up of Gold and Silver, which are otherwiſe accounted the Sinews of a State. As you have received it for nothing, ſo you ſhall give it for nothing, is the Command, which was very well obſerved by *Sr.* Act. 3. 6. *Peter*, when he ſaid, *Silver and Gold have I none.* And, leſt they ſhould, under pretence of Subſiſtance and acquiring Neceſſaries, be enticed to Avarice, Chriſt forbid them, even to provide two Coats, Shoes, Staves, or a Purſe; but that they ſhould be contented with what they received from their Auditors. It is not to be denied, but that this Command may chiefly be applied to ſuch Journeys, as were not to be too long, or in far diſtant Countries; But on the other hand it ought to be taken into conſideration, that the Allowances, to be given to thoſe that preached the Goſpel, are compared to the Wages of Workmen, which ſeldom amount to any more, than is neceſſary for Subſiſtance; or, at the moſt, cannot exceed a private Fortune, having not the leaſt compariſon with thoſe vaſt Revenues, which are required to maintain a State. As may be ſeen in *Mat.* 10. 10. *Luk.* 10. 7. 1 *Cor.* 9. 11. And the paſſage in the 1 Epiſt. to *Timothy* 5. 18. chiefly relates to the Prieſthood, where it is expreſly forbidden not to make a Trade of their Office, and to fly Avarice, as the root of all Evil; and conſequently of all thoſe Abuſes and Superſtitions, which have overwhelmed the Church of *Rome*, And, that by their Number they might not appear terrible, Chriſt only

only ſends them two and two, with this expreſs Command, not to force their Doctrine upon any Body, but to ſeek for reception by a kind Salute, and, if they find them inclined to receive their Doctrine, to abide there, but to leave thoſe, whom they found unworthy, and not ready to hear their Words, and even to ſhake off the Duſt of their Feet. After theſe Inſtructions given, Chriſt foretels them what Perſecutions and Dangers they muſt undergo, all which, he will have them to overcome, not by Force, but by Patience, by ſhewing their Innocence, or flying to another Place. The quite contrary is practiſed in Temporal Governments, whoſe Founders lay this down for a ſure Maxim of State, *Tu contra audentior ito. Never ſhrink before your Enemy.* After the Aſcenſion of our Saviour, they diſperſed into all Parts of the World, according as they were inſpired, without having appointed any certain place of Reſidence for their Government, from whence they might receive their Inſtructions or Commiſſions, and where they were to be accountable concerning their Negotiation, or where to fix the Center of their Correſpondency; at leaſt, thus much is certain, that nothing like it is recorded in the holy Scripture. Neither was it in their Power to have acquired any great Territories, it being obvious, that they lived always under another Juriſdiction, and in ſuch Places, where the Government was already Eſtabliſhed. Nor had they any Authority to exact upon their Auditors, except what they were pleaſed to allot them by voluntary Contribution; For, if they ſhould have

Mark 6. 7.

Mat. 5. 10, 11.

have attempted any thing beyond it, no doubt but those Magistrates, under whose Jurisdiction they lived, might legally have stopt their Proceedings, as done in prejudice of their Authority. For, in case the generality, or the greatest part of the Christians should have attempted to follow the Example of some of their Brethren at *Jerusalem*, who were for having all things in Common, it had been lawful for their Sovereigns to put a stop to their inconsiderate Design, which needs must have tended to the great detriment of the Commonwealth. Lastly, the Apostles did not oblige their Auditors to leave their antient Habitations, like *Moses* led the *Israelites* out of *Egypt*, but left them in quiet Possession of their former Station and honest Functions, not pretending to any Innovation, but that they should receive the Christian Religion.

Acts 2. 44, 45. c. 4. 5.

The Kingdom of Christ implies no Temporal Sovereignty

§. 29. It is furthermore to be considered, whether the Doctrine of Christ, which unites our Hearts under the Obedience of Christ by the Faith, does not, by vertue of this Union, constitute a certain Sovereignty resembling the Sovereign Power of our Civil Governments? To this we answer in the Negative; as it may plainly appear, to those, that will duely consider the Nature and Qualifications, which are in the holy Scripture attributed to the Kingdom of Christ, and the Kingdom of Heaven here upon Earth. It is without question, that the Union of the Believers under Christ, their King, ought to be considered as a Kingdom or Empire, but such a one as is not of this World, and consequently of a quite different

different nature from that Sovereign Power, which is exercised in a Civil Government. Christ is there the King, who having withdrawn himself from our sight, has as it may be said, settled his Court in Heaven. His subjects are dispersed throughout all parts of the World, where the Christian Doctrine is taught and received by the Believers, who, by the intrinsick Vertue of this Doctrine, are confirmed in their Faith, and made proof against all the Temptations and Malice of this World. The Civil Power does not reach this Kingdom; true Piety being not to be implanted by Human Force, which is insufficient to procure God's Grace, or raise those inward Motions which are chiefly acceptable to God Almighty; and without which, all our exterior Actions, that may be enforced by a Civil Authority, are to be deem'd vain and fruitless. For, the Kingdom of Christ being a Kingdom of Truth, it requires no Civil Power or Force; For, Truth, by the help of the Christian Doctrine, and with the assistance of God's Grace, does gently insinuate it self into the Hearts of Men, and the Rewards or Punishments, which those are to receive, that either accept or despise this Doctrine, are reserved for the Life to come. He that will be pleased to examine those several Passages, where mention is made of the Kingdom of Christ, or the Kingdom of Heaven, may soon be convinced, that not any thing is to be met withal there, which has the least resemblance to a Civil Power or Sovereignty. Those that expect to enter into this Kingdom, must qualifie themselves by Repentance. Mat. 3. 2. c. 4. 17. c. 4. 23. &c. 9. 35.

Mat. 5. 1. *seq.* It is ſpoke of Chriſt himſelf, that he went about preaching the Goſpel of the Kingdom of Heaven. The Virtues and Qualifications which Chriſt requires in thoſe, that will enter into his Kingdom, and conſequently be bleſſed with eternal Salvation, have but little relation to the Qualifications of a Subject in a Civil Government. In that Kingdom every one is called great, or the leaſt, according to his Proficiency in the Chriſtian Doctrine, and according to his Obedience or diſobedience to it. We are commanded *firſt to ſeek the Righteouſneſs of this Kingdom.* The great Myſtery of this Kingdom is *the powerful operation of the Word of God.* In this Kingdom are not only ſuffered thoſe that are Foreigners to it, but alſo its Enemies, which is againſt the Maxims, of a Civil Government. The Keys of this Kingdom are contained in the Doctrine of Remiſſion of Sins. And what is taught us concerning Precedency in the Kingdom of Heaven, is quite contrary to what is practiſed in a Civil *State.* It is allowable by the Civil Conſtitutions, for every one to purſue his Right, but, in the Kingdom of Chriſt, he is counted an ill Subject, who will not remit a Treſpaſs to his Brother. The Kingdom of Chriſt is alſo of the little Children. Thoſe that are employed in this Kingdom have different Tasks, and undergo different ſorts of Hardſhip, and yet their Reward is the ſame. This Kingdom is taken from thoſe that refuſe it; whereas it is a Maxim of Temporal Sovereigns, to force ſuch as are refractory to Obedience; and this was the reaſon, why, after the Jews had deſpiſed it,

Mat. 5. 19. c. 7. 21. c. 6. 33. c. 13. 21. 33. 44, 45, 52. c. 24. 47. Mat. 16. 19. Mat. 18. 1. c. 10. 21. c. 23. 8. Mark 9. 33, 34. c. 10. 42. Mat. 18. 23. c. 21. 14. Mark 10. 14. Mat. 20. 1. c. 11. 23 c. 22. 2.

it, it was offered to the Gentiles. He that will enjoy the Benefit of this Kingdom must not be sloathful. The richest find always the easiest Reception in a Civil State, but *the rich Man shall hardly enter into the Kingdom of Christ.* He is accounted a good Subject in a State, who is industrious, and gathers Riches by all lawful ways and means; but this is reckoned as superfluous in the Kingdom of Heaven. One of the chiefest Motives which induced Mankind to enter into Civil Societies, was, to preserve themselves and their Possessions; But Christ says: *Whoever he be of you, that forsaked not all that he hath, he cannot be my Disciple.* And lastly of all, he says: *The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, lo here, or lo there, for behold, the Kingdom of God is within you.* It would be superfluous to alledge more for the proof of it, all the rest being most of them the same in Substance.

c. 25. 1. Mat. 19. 23. Mark 10. 23. Luke 12, 32. Luk. 14. 33. c. 17. 21.

§. 30. Though it be evident that, the Union of the Believers under Christ their King, and that Mystical Body, whose Head is Christ, the Members of all the Believers in general, cannot be considered as a Temporal State; nevertheless, it is worth our enquiry, whether not all those in General, that profess the Christian Doctrine, may be considered as a Body belonging under one Civil Government, or at least, have a near resemblance to a Civil Commonwealth? Or, which is the same in effect, Whether the Church, according to our Saviour's Intention ought to be considered as a State or Commonwealth? We take here the Word State, in its common Acceptation, *viz.* for a

Whether the Church be a State?

certain Society of Men, which being independent from any Foreign Jurisdiction, live under the Protection of their own Sovereigns. The main intention of this Question is, that, after we shall have made it appear, That the Church, according to the intention of Christ and his Apostles, neither was, nor could be a State, it may from thence be concluded, whether that Church which pretends to a Sovereignty, considered as such, be Christ's Church? But, to trace the very original of this Question, it ought first of all to be considered, in what Sense the Word *Ecclesia* or Church, is taken in the holy Scripture. The word *Ecclesia* has its off-spring out of the Democracy's of the *Greeks*, whereby they understood a Convention, Meeting, or sometimes, a Concourse of the People, or of a considerable Part of their Citizens, in order to receive Propositions, to consult and make Decrees, concerning Matters belonging to the Commonwealth. It is derived of *Evocare*, or to Call-forth, not, that thereby was always understood an Assembly, summoned out of a greater Multitude, (for I can see no reason why not all the Citizens had a Right to appear in those Assemblies;) but, because they were called out of their private Dwelling-places,, and from their ordinary Business, to meet in a publick Place. So, that the original Signification of the Word, *Ecclesia*, implies not that of a State, but only a certain Qualification of a Democratical Government; it being evident, that a great number of Men cannot conveniently give their assent to a thing, unless they be Convened in one

What is understood in the holy Scripture by the word Ecclesia?

one Place. In the Tranſlation the *LXX* Interpreters, this Word is taken for a Convention, or Meeting of a conſiderable number of People; met, not only for the exerciſe of Divine Worſhip, but alſo for unlawful Ends. So the *Greek* word Εκκλησιαζειν, is taken for the Calling and Summoning an Aſſembly, about Matters concerning the Commonwealth. But in the New Teſtament, the word *Eccleſia*, is, generally, taken, either, for all the Chriſtians in General, wherever diſperſed, or for the Congregation of the Believers in a certain Country, City, private Houſe, or Family. In either ſenſe, if we duely weigh the Attributes and Actions properly belonging to the Church (for by theſe we ought to judge of the Nature of a thing in Moral Caſes) we do not meet with any thing, which has a relation to a Civil State. The true Encomium moſt frequently given to the Members of the Church is; that they are *Brothers, holy, and redeemed by the Blood of Chriſt.* Their chief Actions are ſaid to be, *to hear the Word of God, to pray unto and praiſe God, to be Charitable, to walk in the fear of God, to Faſt, and to provide for the Poor.* It is ſpoken of St. *Paul* and *Barnabas*, That they did Conſtitute Elders in thoſe Churches, which they had planted in *Aſia*, where the word χειροτονησαντες, is made uſe of, which implies as much, as having made them by Suffrages of the Congregation; in the ſame manner as the Decrees uſed to paſs in the antient Democracies, by the plurality of Votes; by which it appears, that they pretended to no Abſolute Power of Conſtituting Elders o-

Pſ. 26. 5. Luk. 23. 3, 4. c. 38. 24. Acts 19. 32. 39. Num. 20. 8, 10. Joſ. 16. 1, 2. 2 Chron. 15. 9. c. 34. 29.

What actions are celebrated in Scripture as belonging to the Church.

Act. 1. 4. 23.

over them, but such as were approved of by the Congregation. And it is remarkable that these, nevertheless are said to have been made *Overseers over the Church by the Holy Ghost*. So were the Judges, that were set in the Land by *Jehoshaphat*, *stiled Judges for the Lord*; because, whoever is fitly qualified for any Office or Function, not contrary to the Word of God, and has obtained the same by lawful ways and Means, may justly be said to have been Constituted in that same Office by God Almighty. And though it belongs most properly to the Church to constitute Teachers, this nevertheless does not imply any Act of Sovereignty; it being evident, that a private Colledge or Society, subject to another Jurisdiction, may lawfully enjoy the same Power. A Dissension being arosen concerning an Article of Faith in the Church of *Antiocha*, they determined, that some of them should go concerning this Question then in dispute, to the Church of *Jerusalem*; And these Deputies were by the rest of the Brethren, conducted out of the Town, in their way to *Jerusalem*; where this Question having been debated, and determined, they sent Word thus, to their Brethren, *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and us*, &c. where it is to be observed, that to send Deputies, concerning such Matters, as are not intended in prejudice of the Sovereign Power; for one Congregation to consult another, concerning any Articles of Faith; and to determine any Differences about them, are to be looked upon, as Actions of such a nature, which do not imply a Sovereign and Absolute Power;

Act. 20. 28.
2 Chron. 19. 5
Act. 15. 2,

Power; but may legally belong to a private Colledge, or sometimes a private Person; provided the Business in hand be not imposed upon its Members, but transacted and admitted by common consent. So the Church of *Jerusalem*, chose certain Men, who were to be Overseers of the Poor, which they had a Right to do, as being a Society or Colledge. In the same Sense ought to be taken, what is said in the 2 Epistle to the *Corinthians*, *c.* 8. 19. That the Churches had chosen one to travel with St. *Paul*. The Church is called *a Flock, which is to be fed by the Bishops, with the pure Word of God, who are to preserve it from the Wolves*; That is to say, from *Men speaking perverse things, to draw away Disciples after them*; Against those Teachers of the Church ought to be watchful, not ceasing to Admonish their Auditors to avoid their Snares. What concerns that passage in the 1 Epistle to the *Corinthians*, *c.* 6. 1. and following *Verses*, it is apparent enough, that there is not any Sovereign Authority or Jurisdiction granted to the Christians, (barely considered as Christians:) But the Apostle enjoyns them, that in case of any Differences in Civil Affairs among the Members of the Church, they should rather refer it to the Arbitration of the Brethren, than to go to Law before the Gentiles, and fall under the Censure of being Avaricious. In the following Chapter, it is plainly expressed, that no body, by becoming a Member of the Church, does change his Qualification or Function, which belonged to him as a Subject; or that Christianity is inconsistent with the Subjection to a Civil Government; a Servant

Acts 6. 1, 2.

Acts 20. 28.

therefore, by being a Christian, does not become a Freeman; neither is a Subject thereby absolved from the Allegiance due to his Sovereign; concerning the Union and Modesty, which ought to be practised in the Church, or the Christian Congregations, where the Word of God was Preached, and the Sacraments Administred, St. *Paul* speaks in the 1 Epistle to the *Corinthians*, *c.* 11. 18 and following *Verses*; and in the 14 *Chap.* 34, 40 *Verse*. And, what sort of Religious Exercises was to be used in these Congregations, is expressed in the 1 Epistle to the *Corinthians*, *c.* 14. *viz.* to be *Hymns*, *Doctrines*, *Tongues*, *Propheſies*, *Revelations*, *Interpretations*; all which are to be applied to Edifie the Congregation; and in the 12 *Chapter*, 28 *Verse*, the several Degrees and Functions of the Members of the Church, are thus enumerated: First, *Apostles*, secondarily, *Prophets*, thirdly, *Teachers*; after that, *Miracles*, then *Gifts of Healings*, *Helps*, *Governments*, *Diversities of Tongues*; All which are Requisites belonging to the propagating and establishing of the Gospel, and are Gifts of that self same Spirit, who dispenses his Gifts to every Man, as he pleases; So, that he, that has received more noble Endowments, can therefore not claim any Prerogative, as being a more honorable Member of this Mystical Body, or pretend to any Jurisdiction over such as are not endowed with these Qualifications in the same Degree as himself. And charity, which is the inseparable Attribute of all Christians, is more noble and excellent than all other spiritual Gifts. Alms are the only Taxes which belong

Ep. Rom. 13. 1.
2 Tim. 3. 8, 14 *c.* 6. 1, 2.
Vid Eph. 4. 2.
Eph. 4. 11
1 Cor. 16. 1.
2 Cor. 8. 2, 3, 8.

long to the Church, and these also cannot be exacted by the Sovereign Authority of the Church; Tho' it be undeniable, that every Church is obliged to maintain its Ministers. In the 2 Epist. to the *Corinthians*, *c.* 11. 28. St. *Paul* professes, That *the Care of all the Churches lies upon him, to strengthen those that were weak, and to obviate Scandals.* And in the next following *Chapter*, he says, That the Church of *Corinth* is in no wise inferior to other Churches, which were planted by others, who had exercised the Apostolical Function before him. Neither is any thing to be met withal in the Holy Scripture, which proves the Subordination of one Church to another; Nay, the Congregations of small Towns, and even of private Families, are often stiled Churches, as those of vast Cities; and those particular Churches, which were planted in *Judea*, are called the Churches of God. In the Epistle to the *Ephesians*, *c.* 1. 22. *c.* 5. 23. and to the *Colossians*, *c.* 1 18, 24. Christ is called the *Head of the Body of the Church, which he has presented to himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be Holy and without Blemish, sanctified by Christ's Redemption, and cleansed with the washing of Water, by the Word.* What Qualifications are required in a Bishop, or a Governour of a particular Church, is expressed in the 1 Epistle to *Timothy*, *c.* 3. 2. and following *Verses*; in the 2 Epistle to *Timothy*, *c.* 4. 2. in the Epistle to *Titus*, *c.* 1. 2, 8, 9, and *c.* 2. 7. All which, if duely examined, have a relation meerly to the Purity of his Doctrine, and his being blameless in his Behaviour; and

1 Tim. 5. 16. Phil. 4. 15. Cor. 9. 14. 1 Tim. 5. 18. 1 Thes. 2. 14. 2 Thes. 1. Ephes. 5. 26, 27.

do not in the leaſt ſavour of any thing properly belonging to the Supream Governours of a State. For, it is ſaid, that he muſt be *the Huſband of one Wife, Vigilant, Sober, of a good Behaviour, given to Hoſpitality, apt to Teach; Not given to Wine, no Striker, not greedy of Filthy Lucre; but patient, not a Bawler, not Covetous. One that ruled well his own Houſe, having his Children in Subjection, with all Gravity; Not a Novice, not lifted up with Pride*; All which are ſuch Vertues as belong properly to a Teacher, or a private Perſon. In the 1 Epiſtle to *Timothy*, *c.* 3. 15. the Church is called, *the Houſe of God*; στύλος καὶ ἑδραίωμα, or, *The Pillar and Ground of Truth*; like we are uſed to affix Proclamations to great Pillars, to the view of every body. Tho' ſome antient Manuſcripts refer theſe words; *The Pillar and Ground of Truth*, to the following Sentence; the Preceding ending with the words, *The Church of the living God.* Then begins a new Sentence thus: *The pillar and ground of Truth, and without Controverſy, great is the Myſtery of Godlineſs. God was manifeſt in the Fleſh*, &c. So, that, in this ſenſe, this Paſſage is parallel to what Chriſt told St. *Peter* by St. *Matthew*, *c.* 16. 18. and to that of St. *John*, *c.* 20. 31. The Titles of Honour belonging to the Chriſtian Church, are recited in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, *c.* 12. 22. where it is called, *The mount of Sion, the City of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, the innumerable Company of Angels; the General Aſſembly and Church of the firſt Born, which are written in Heaven, where God is the Judge of all, and Jeſus the Mediator of the New*

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Covenant, and the Sperit of juſt Men made perfect. And in the *Revelation*, c. 2. 3. the Churches of *Aſia* are praiſed for their good Deeds, and their Vices expoſed, with a ſevere Commination, that, if they did not repent, their Candleſtick (which is the Doctrine of the Goſpel) ſhould be taken away from them; which is ſufficient to ſhew, that the Light of the Goſpel may be extinguiſhed in particular *Churches*. All theſe paſſages, if duely compared and examined, do not furniſh us with any Matter, proving the Chriſtian Church to be a State, or to have any reſemblance to a Temporal Sovereignty.

The Condition of the primitive Church was ſuch, as not to permit a Sovereignty within it ſelf.

§. 31. But; beſides what has been ſaid already, a great many Reaſons may be alledged, which ſufficiently prove, that it was not in the power of the Apoſtles, to plant a Church, reſembling in Power, to a Temporal Sovereignty, if they had entertained any Thoughts of attempting a Deſign both unneceſſary and illegal. The common Security is the main End of every Government, whereby Men are enabled to defend themſelves by their united ſtrength againſt all Injuries; which cannot be performed without a conſiderable number of ſtout and well appointed Men. But the Name of the Church, is often given to the Congregations of an indifferent Town, nay even of private Families; And does not our Saviour himſelf ſay? *Where two or three are gathered in my Name, there am I in the midſt of them.* Which moved *Tertullian* to ſay: *Three make up a Church, as well as a Colledge.* And where Chriſt is in the midſt of a Congregation, certainly there cannot Mat. 18. 20.

not be wanting ſufficient Means to obtain Salvation, *viz.* the Word, the Miniſter, and the Sacraments; ſo, that the end and ſcope of the Chriſtian Religion may be attained to, even in an indifferent numerous Congregation of the Believers. Neither does the greater number of the Believers joyned in one Church (like a vaſt number of People is neceſſary for the erecting of a State) in it ſelf conſidered, add any thing, or is neceſſary for the obtaining the end of the Chriſtian Religion, it being indifferent, in regard of obtaining Salvation, whether a Man worſhip God in a great or ſmall Congregation. From whence this inference may be made, That, in caſe, the greateſt part of the Church ſhould ſeparate it ſelf from the others, the reſt, notwithſtanding all this, may purſue and obtain the End of the Chriſtian Faith; Quite otherwiſe as it is with Temporal Commonweaths, where, if the greateſt part of its Inhabitants happen to be rooted out, the reſt will be thereby diſinabled to maintain the State. Theſe Qualifications belonging to Subjects; eſpecially to ſuch of them as are to be preferred before others in a State, either for their Uſefulneſs, or the honour of the Commonwealth, are not eſteemed the ſame in the Church, ſo, that he, who does not excel in Riches, Strength or Wiſdom, ſhall therefore not be deemed a good Chriſtian. Furthermore; thoſe that pretend to lay the Foundation of a new State, muſt have Territories belonging to them, where their new Subjects may ſettle themſelves and their Fortunes. And, all ſuch as live, or are ſeated in a Commonwealth, if they pretend to ſet up a new State, muſt either

1 Cor. 20. 21, 22.

tranſplant

transplant themselves into another Country, or else overturn that Government, under which they then live. So, when *Moses* delivered the *Israelites* from the *Ægyptian* Bondage, he led them into the Desarts of *Arabia*. And, when *Romulus* had resolved to erect a new Commonwealth, he first withdrew himself from the Subjection of the Kings of *Alba*; and such of the Neighbouring Countries, as were for being Members of that new Commonwealth, did leave their former Habitations, and settled themselves in *Rome*. But neither Christ, nor his Apostles, did ever remove Christians from their Habitations to other Places, but allowed every body to remain in the same Station, and under the same Government, without the least prejudice to the former Rights of their Sovereigns over them. From whence it is evident, that the Christians, tho' never so numerous, could not be in a condition to settle themselves under any one State of their own. For, since, according to the Rules of the Christian Religion, the Rights of Sovereigns over their Subjects Lives and Goods, are not taken away or impair'd, and no body can be subject to two Masters, there could be no pretence of erecting a new Sovereignty; especially in the midst of another Commonwealth, nay, it was beyond their Power, even to enter into such a Society, as should be in the least prejudicial to the Rights of their present Sovereigns. Who can be so ignorant in civil Affairs, as not to understand, what prodigious Sums of Money are required for the maintainig of a State. And, tho' the Rights of

Rom. 13. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 13.

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Sovereigns do not extend so far as to take away from Subjects the private disposal of their Goods; nevertheless may they lawfully restrain the Extravagancy of their Subjects, if they pretend to dispose of their Goods in prejudice of the State. For; if this Liberty should be granted to the Subjects without limitation, the State, if deprived of its nourishment would quickly be reduced to a languishing condition, or else, private Men might be enabled to erect a new State in the midst of the old one, or at least, to impair, and endanger the Publick Safety. And, since those Sovereigns, under whose Jurisdiction the Apostles lived, had the same Right over the Fortunes of their Subjects, as other Governments have; and the Rights of Sovereigns were not taken away, by the Doctrine of Christ, there could be no other provision made for the maintainance of those Congregations, (as such) but what was consistent with the lawful Rights of their Sovereigns, and as much only as might lawfully be given by private Persons; which could not exceed a private Fortune, and were nothing more than Voluntary Contributions or Alms; And, whatsoever of any real Estate was attributed to these Uses, was thereby not exempted from paying of Taxes, no more than the Estates of other Subjects.

The inward Structure of the Church is quite different from that of a State.

§. 32. But if we take a full view of the whole Structure of Civil Societies, and by what means Subjects were united under one Government; we shall find them to differ as Heaven and Earth from that Union, which belongs properly to the Body of a Church. If

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we trace that Original of Civil Societies or Commonwealths, it is evident, that Men having found the Inconveniencies and Dangers which attended a ſolitary Life in the free natural State, did enter and unite themſelves into Societies for their common Security: And having agreed to a certain Form of Government, did conſtitute one certain Perſon, or a Counſel, who were to be the ſupream Governours of that Society; unto whom they ſubmitted themſelves and their fortunes, for the common Benefit of that Society. But Churches were erected upon quite another Foundation. For here, Men, being made ſenſible of their miſerable condition, did not by their own accord and a general agreement, turn themſelves to God Almighty, but, being on the contrary overwhelmed with Darkneſs and Ignorance, ſo, as to be over ſecure, and neglecting their own Salvation, God did ſend his Meſſengers among them, *commanding all men every where to repent.* Here is not the leaſt footſtep of any general Agreement of Men to erect and ſubmit themſelves under one Church; but each particular Perſon for himſelf, without any reſpect or regard to others did follow Chriſt and his Doctrine. And, whereas in a Civil State, the whole family has its dependency from their Maſter, and enjoys all the Privileges belonging to them under his Protection; it is quite different in the Church, where the Wife is not obliged to follow her Husband's Religion, nor the Servant the Maſter. So, were in the family of *Narciſſus* (who himſelf was not a Chriſtian

Acts 17. 30.

1 Cor. 7. 12, 21.

ſeveral

several Christian Servants, who are saluted as such by S. *Paul*. And in this sense is to be taken what is said by Christ, He that loved Father or Mother, Son or Daughter more than me, is not worthy of me: As likewise what is mentioned concerning Divisions, Discords, Dissensions, which are to be raised by the Doctrine of Christ among the nearest Friends, is to be understood of the strict Union betwixt Christ and the Believers, which surpasses, and is to be preferred before all the Tyes of Consanguinity among Men. So that, if a Father, Husband or Master should turn Apostate, the Son, Wife or Servant are not obliged to follow their footsteps. Neither is it requisite to be solicitous about any particular or certain Form of Government in the Church, *viz.* whether the same ought to be Monarchical, Aristocratical or Democratical. For, these several Forms belonging only to a Civil Government are very preposterously made use of in the behalf of the Church, which is far different from a Temporal State. And as Churches and Commonwealths are erected for different Ends: so the Offices belonging to both are altogether of a different Nature. Who is so ignorant as not to know, that for the obtaining the Ends of Civil Societies, it was requisite to constitute various Degrees of Dignities appertaining to the Managers of the State; whereas the most plain and natural Distinction betwixt Christians in reference to the Church, is only that of Teachers and Auditors.

Rom 16. 11.

Mat. 10. 37 c 12. 50. Luk. 14. 26.

Mat. 10. 34.

§. 33. Be-

§ 33. Beſides all this, the Teachers in a Church, do not only differ from Temporal Governours in a State, in that theſe are conſtituted for different Ends: But the main Difference is the very nature of their Conſtitution. We will not inſiſt here upon the Point of Succeſſion, by which a great many Sovereigns obtain their Sovereign Power, which is quite otherwiſe in the Church: But we will only treat in this place concerning the different Conſtitution betwixt Teachers, and ſuch Sovereigns, as exerciſe the Supream Civil Power, by Vertue of Election. When therefore the Sovereign Power is lodged in any Perſons by Election, the reſt who have thus choſen them their Supream Governour, do thereby ſubmit themſelves to the Diſpoſal of thoſe their Sovereigns, in ſuch a manner as to oblige themſelves, that whatſoever they think conducing for the publick Welfare, ſhall be taken as ſuch by the whole Body; and that they will always be ready to execute their Commands: Wherefore Sovereigns are always inveſted with a full Power to force their Subjects to a compliance with their Commands, by inflicting Puniſhments upon them. But how is it poſſible to imagine that any Church or Congregation of the Believers ſhould ever, or ought to ſubmit themſelves ſo entirely to the Pleaſure and Diſpoſal of their Teachers; as to oblige themſelves to acquieſce barely in, and to follow blindly, whatever ſhall be propoſed by them, as conducing and leading to the way of Salvation; it being certain without contradiction, that none

9 *There is a great difference betwixt Teachers in a Church, and the Governours of a State.*

none of the Believers do entirely ſubmit themſelves and their Faith to any Body but to God Almighty, whoſe Will and Commands ought to be interpreted by the Teachers of the Church, and their Auditors to be exhorted to a due Compliance with them. For, whoever it be, that propoſes any Doctrine ſurpaſſing human Reaſon, if he pretends to gain credit by his Auditors, muſt either claim it by Virtue of his own Authority, or by Compulſion, or by Virtue of a more Superiour Power. But any Man that offers Matters not agreeable to Reaſon, does thereby expoſe himſelf, and ſo looſes his Authority, except he can by other more powerful means maintain his Doctrine, and gain credit with his Auditors. It was for this Reaſon, that, to the Greeks, who were Men that ſought after Wiſdom and Reaſon, the Preaching of the Apoſtles was Fooliſhneſs. And *S. Paul* was for the ſame Reaſon nick-named a *Babler* by the *Athenian* Philoſophers. Neither is any human Power capable of enforcing the Myſteries of Faith and the Chriſtian Doctrine upon People; for which reaſon Chriſt told his Apoſtles, Go and Teach, and Believe, and that with all your hearts; to obtain which, all human means which imply any Temporal Advantages, or are forcible in their own nature, are to be taken for Trifles and inſufficient. There is then no other Way left, but that ſuch Doctrines muſt be verified by a Superiour Being or Principle, *viz.* the Grace of God, which always accompanies the Goſpel, and thoſe Miracles wherewith

1 *Cor.* 1. 23.

Acts 17. 18

Mark 16. 20.

with the Apoſtles antiently authorized their Doctrine; Tho' it is at the ſame time undeniable, that ſince the Goſpel is ſufficiently ſpread abroad in the World, we do not now any more ſtand in need of ſuch Miracles: In the ſame manner as the Thunder and Lightning which were heard at the Publiſhing of the Ten Commandments, were never repeated afterwards among the *Jews*. The Chriſtians therefore have ſubmitted their Faith and Reaſon only to Chriſt, whoſe Authority is unqueſtionable, as being God himſelf, and was teſtified by his Father's Voice from Heaven, when he ſaid, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* And, as the People of *Iſrael* willingly ſubmitted their Faith to *Moſes*, as ſoon as he had given them plain Demonſtrations of his Divine Commiſſion; ſo were they obliged to ſubimt their Faith to the Apoſtles, after they had once verified their Divine Commiſſion by their Miracles: Tho' it cannot be denied, but that their Doctrine did ſometimes produce good Effects without Miracles. It is therefore very obſervable, that when they preached and taught their Doctrine to ſuch as were well verſed in the Old Teſtament, they did not take it amiſs, if their Auditors examined their Words, whether they were conſonant with the Propheſies contained therein. From whence it is ſufficently apparent, that no body ought to engage himſelfunto a blind Obedience of ſuch Teachers, as cannot verifie their immediate Divine Commiſſion by Miracles, ſo as to make his Faith abſolutely dependant from their Doctrine

Acts 14. 3. Heb. 2. 4.

Mat. 3. 17. Luk. 3. 22.

Exod. 20. 19.

Acts 17. 10.

without Exception, but only ſo far, as their Doctrine is found agreeable to the Doctrine of thoſe who had given manifeſt demonſtrations of their divine Authority. And for this Reaſon it is, that it is not ſufficient for a Teacher in the Church to ſay, ſo it is, and ſo it ſhall and muſt be: But he lies under an indiſpenſible Obligation of making it plain and apparent, that, what he offers to his Auditors, is abſolutely conſonant to the Doctrine publiſhed by Chriſt and his Apoſtles. Neither ought the Auditors pin their Faith upon the Authority of their Teachers, but to refer themſelves to the Authority of God and his Word, which is the Touchſtone by which the Teachers Doctrine is to be examined and approved. The Schools of Philoſophers uſed to take their Names from their Chief Teachers or Founders, as we may obſerve in the Schools of *Plato*, *Ariſtoteles* and *Zeno*: But the Church ought to have no other Name, but that ſhe is the Church of God or Chriſt. It was upon that ſcore when S. *Paul* rebuked the *Corinthians*, becauſe ſome of them ſaid, they were of
1 Cor. 1 12 *Paul*, ſome of *Apollo*, ſome of *Cephas*, and ſome of *Chriſt*. So that ſince the holy Scripture is now eſtabliſhed among us, Chriſtians ought not to be like the Diſciples of *Pythagoras*, who uſed for their Motto, that old Saying αὐτὸς ἔφα, *He himſelf has ſpoken it:* But they have ſufficient Authority to look themſelves into the Holy Scripture, and to examine whether the Doctrine of their Teachers be agreeable to the Doctrine of our Saviour. For, Chriſt, when he ſaid, *ſearch the Scriptures*, did not only ſpeak to his Diſciples,

ſciples, but to his Auditors in general. And *S. Paul* bid us *to prove all things, and to hold faſt that which is good.* *S. John* ſays, *that we ſhall try the Spirits, whether they are of God.* Neither can I conceive how the Examination of our ſelves, which *S. Paul* ſo highly recommends to all that intend to be Partakers of the Lords Supper, can be duely performed without meditating the Scriptures. For, in this caſe, I take the condition of a Teacher and of a Phyſician, to be quite different; it being only required in the latter to underſtand the Art of Phyſick, and to apply the ſame to his Patients, which may be done with good Succeſs, tho' they be never ſo ignorant. But it is not ſufficient for a Teacher of a Church to be alone verſed in the Articles of the Chriſtian Religion; that Church being to be deemed moſt excellent, where the Auditors are not inferiour to their Teachers in the Cognition of the Myſteries of the Faith. For the Apoſtles did not ſhun to declare unto Mankind all the Counſel of God, having not committed the Chriſtian Doctrine to the care and cuſtody of one particular Perſon, who was to be the only Interpreter of it, as the Sibyllin Oracles were antiently at *Rome* in the Cuſtody of the *Decemviri.* And becauſe Chriſtians do not build their Faith upon any Human Authority, but upon the Word of God alone, they are ſaid to be taught of God. For which Reaſon *S. Paul* utterly denied that they had any Dominion over the Faith of the *Corinthians*; or, which is the ſame in effect, that they could

Joh. 5. 39. 1 Theſ. 5. 21. 1 Joh. 4. 1. 1 Cor. 11. 28. Act. 20. 27. Joh. 6. 15. 1 Theſ. 4. 9.

exercise any Dominion over them under the
2 Cor. 1. 24. Pretence of Faith. For the rest, as Christians which are well versed in the Scriptures, may, without great difficulty, try their Teacher's Doctrine by the Touchstone of the Holy Scripture: So the Catechism and other compendious Instructions relating to the chiefest Articles of the Christian Faith may be sufficient for those of a meaner Capacity, wherein all Christians ought to be well instructed in their younger Years, both by their Parents and Teachers of the Church, this being likely to prove more useful to those of an indifferent Capacity than all the other Subtilities and Controversies, which in themselves are not absolutely necessary, or requisite to be understood by every Christian in particular. And if we duely consider what is
Rom. 10. 9, 10. required by the Apostle for the obtaining of
1 Tim. 1. 5. Salvation, we shall find that this Knowledge
2 Tim. 2. 23. may be attained to without much Difficulty; because the Confession that *Jesus was Christ, the Son of God*, is the Foundation Stone, and, as it was, the Center of the Christian
Joh. 20. 31 Religion, and that this Article was chiefly opposed by the Gates of Hell in the time of the Primitive Christians, the Apostle S. *John* prescribes this as a general Rule to be particularly taken notice of by such as are of a
1 Joh. 4. 2, 3. mean Capacity: *Hereby know you* (said he) *the Spirit of God: Every Spirit that confesseth, that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is of God; and every Spirit that confesseth not, that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is not of God.* Though from hence no Inference ought

ought to be made, as if Christians may neglect, or ought not also to be well instructed concerning all the other Articles of Faith, or that it is indifferent for any Christian to believe, what he pleases, concerning the rest of the Articles of the Christian Doctrine.

Whether the whole Christian Church ought to be considered as a State.

§. 34. It being then evident, that there is a great difference betwixt the condition of particular Churches, and that of a State or Commonwealth: It may further be enquired into, whether perhaps those Churches united don't make up a Body like to that of a great State? For it is certain, that the Word Church is in the Scriptures attributed to the whole Body of the Believers wheresoever dispersed throughout the World; yet so, that there is not the least appearance (if a due regard be had to our Saviour's Intention) of a Design to erect a State. *Go you into all the World, and Preach the Gospel to every Creature*, are the Words of our Saviour to his Disciples. Here is no mention made of any Persons, who should be the supream Governours over the rest (as is usual, and absolutely necessary in a State) nor any certain Place of Residence appointed for these Governours, from whence the rest should receive their Orders. Neither is the least care taken by what means they should maintain a Correspondency with their capital City: And truly, considering the vast Extent of the World, and the prodigious Distance of those Countries, where the Apostles Preach-d the Gospel: (besides, that there was a mortal Enmity betwixt some of these States) these were unsurmounta-

Mark. 16. 15

ble Obſtacles for the ſettling and maintaining a Correſpondency betwixt them. So that it does not appear, by what means all the Chriſtians could be united under one State. It is not denied but that there is often mention made in the Scripture, of the Union of the Chriſtians; as in the 1 *Cor.* c. 12. 12, 13. *As the body is one, and had many members, and all the members of that one body being many, are one body: So alſo is Chriſt. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.* Chriſt ſays in the 10. Chap. of *S. John*, ver. 16, *My Sheep hear my voice, and there ſhall be one fold and one ſhepherd.* Which ſhews, that all the Sheep are brought into one Flock by hearing the Voice of their Paſtour, who is Chriſt. So it is ſaid in the Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, ch. 4. ver. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. *Forbearing one another in love, endeavouring the Unity of the Spirit in the bond af peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling: One Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm, one God and Father of all.* And Chriſt, in his farewel Sermon, does chiefly recommend to his Diſciples Charity and Unity, as the true Badges of Chriſtianity: And the Name of Brother which particularly belongs to the Chriſtians, ſeems to imply a general union betwixt them. But if we conſider the Nature of theſe holy Tyes, we may eaſily obſerve them to have been in no ways adapted to the Conſtitution of a temporal Government; but properly belonging to the

Joh. 13.

Vid. 1 Cor. 13.

Coloſ. 3. 14.

Gal. 6. 10.

the Eſtabliſhment and Union of a myſtical Body. For, as none of them requires or implies any dependency from a Temporal Power, ſo they may belong in common to all Chriſtians, tho' living in far diſtant Countries, and ſeveral Juriſdictions.

There is no neceſſity for Chriſtians to be united under one State.

§. 35. Neither does it appear, for what end or purpoſe all the Chriſtians in General ſhould be reduced under one State. For, each Congregation or Church may with more eaſe and conveniency conſtitute Teachers in their Churches, fitly qualified for the Miniſtry of the Goſpel, and have a more watchful Eye over thoſe who are known, and near at hand, than can be expected from one ſingle Perſon, (tho' never ſo wiſe) living at a great diſtance; who being beſides this, ovewhelmed with multitude of Buſineſſes, is forced to ſee with other Peoples Eyes, and to hear with other Peoples Ears. Neither is it a ſufficient Reaſon, what is alledged, that for the compoſing and determining of ſuch Differences as may ariſe betwixt the Teachers of the Church, or betwixt them and others, a General Court ought to be eſtabliſhed in the Chriſtian Church, it being evident, that ſuch Caſes can be no where determined with more conveniency, than in the ſame Government where they live; and that there cannot any ſufficient reaſon be given, why they ſhould not acknowledge the ſame Juriſdiction with the reſt of their fellow Subjects. There is one objection which has ſomething of colour in it; for it is alledged, That if all the Chriſtian Churches throughout the World were united under one Head, (whether

under one Perſon, or a certain Aſſembly, matters not) the unity of Faith might be better preſerved, Controverſies ſooner compoſed, and Hereſies ſuppreſſed or quite extinguiſhed; but if the whole matter be duely weighed, it will appear, that ſuch an Eccleſiaſtical Monarch may be very eaſily ſpared in the Church. For, granting ſuch an univerſal Judge of all Controverſies ariſing in the Church, he muſt be ſuppoſed to be infallible, (and that beyond all contradiction) as well in point of Matter of Fact, as to the lawfulneſs of the Caſe; for it may ſo happen, that it be plain enough, whether a Doctrine be erroneous or not, when at the ſame time, it may be diſputable, whether the ſaid Error ought to be laid to a certain Man's Charge or not? For, if an Appeal be allowed from this Judge, after Sentence pronounced, there will never be an end of the Proceſs. It is therefore abſolutely requiſite, that this infallible Authority ſhould be ſo manifeſtly proved, that it cannot reaſonably be called in queſtion. For, unleſs this Authority be unqueſtionable for the deciſion of this Controverſie, we muſt run from this Judge to another, who muſt alſo be ſuppoſed to be Infallible, and ſo in infinite; it being granted by all, without Exception, that no body ought to be a Judge in his own Caſe. And, ſince this Privilege of being Infallible, could not be granted by any body, but by God alone; (the whole Body of Chriſtians, being not inveſted with ſuch a Power) it muſt plainly be proved out of the Scriptures, that this particular Prerogative and Authority was granted to one certain Perſon, for him and his Succeſſors t

Whether it be neceſſary to ſet up a general Judge of all Controverſies in the Church?

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decide all Controverſies concerning the Articles of Faith, without being liable to any Error. But, of this there is not the leaſt footſtep in the holy Scripture; Nay, the Apoſtles, when they were ſent by Chriſt into all the World, were endued with the ſame Spirit, and had an equal Authority. So, that there is but one way now left, for the attaining to the true Knowledge of the Chriſtian Religion, both for the Teachers in the Church, and all Believers in general, which is, to ſtudy the Scriptures devoutly, and without Intermiſſion. And whoever pretends to Inſpiration, or to a prophetical Spirit, ought by undeniable Demonſtrations to juſtifie his Pretenſions. 2 Tim. 3. 14, 15.

Theſe Qualifications, which the Apoſtle *Paul* deſcribes in the 2 Epiſtle to *Timothy*, *c.* 2. 24, 25, ought to be applied to all Biſhops and Teachers in general: *And the Servant of the Lord*, he ſays, *muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach patiently. In meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth.* Out of what has been ſaid, it is apparent, that, if any one now adays, does pretend to any Prerogative, or Infallibility in deciding Controverſies as to matter of Faith, he ought to be endued with ſuch extraordinary Qualifications, as are moſt requiſite for the due Explaining and Interpreting the Senſe of the holy Scripture, and this in ſo high a degree, as that the other Teachers in the Church are not able to ſtand in Competition with him, nay, that even all their joint Endeavours, in this kind, are not to be compared

pared to his Judgment. Besides this, it must be supposed, that this universal Judge (except he be to be look'd upon as an useless Engine) must be invested with a Power to execute his Decrees, and to oblige all Christians to acquiesce in his Judgment; For, if it be supposed, that his Decrees have no other force, than as far as they influence People by the force of Truth, they would be either useless, or else this Judge in vain pretends thereby to any further Prerogative, but what he has in common with other Christians that apply themselves to the Study of the holy Scripture. Furthermore, this obliging Power must either have been obtained by a peculiar Privilegde granted by God Almighty, or by a general consent of the Christians, or by an inherent Right to a Sovereignty over all the Christian Churches. As for a priviledge granted by God, or the general consent of the Christian Churches, there is not the least Proof of it, as far as ever I could find; And as to the pretended Sovereign Power, its legal Title ought to be proved by such Documents as are suitable to so great a Pretension. For it is a very insignificant Proof, to alledge in a case of such Moment Tradition, and a long continued Usurpation, which adds nothing to the right of a long continued illegal Possession, and cannot be taken for a solid Foundation, whereupon to build a real Pretension to such a Sovereignty; for it is possible, that, whereas something of a Prerogative was intended in the primitive times, the same, in process of Time, has been abused, and consequently degenerated into an insufferable

able Tyranny. We cannot therefore, but look upon such a Tradition, as has not the least foundation in the Scriptures, as very suspicious; especially, when we consider, that such a Sovereign Power is quite contrary to the true Genius of the Christian Religion. It may perhaps be objected, that nothing else can be so powerful to put a stop to all Controversies; but it ought to be considered also, that thereby the worst sort of Slavery must be introduced, worse than that whereof *Tacitus* complains in his time: *Adempto, per Inquisitiones, & loquendi audiendiq; Commercio, atque ipsa cum voce memoria perdatur, si tam in nostra potestate foret oblivisci, quam tacere. By the Inquisition the benefit of our Tongue and Ears is taken away at once; and if it was as easie to controul Mens Memories, as it is to bridle their Tongues, the very remembrance of things past, had been long ago abolished among us.* Truly, by such Methods, perhaps the Commonwealth may be stock'd with Hypocrites, and dissembling Hereticks, but few will be brought over to the Orthodox Christian Faith. As it is therefore absolutely requisite, that a hidden Ulcer should be laid open, whereby it may the sooner be purg'd from its Malignancy, and proper Remedies more immediately be applied to the affected Part; So, is it much conducing in the Church, that such Scruples and Erroneous Opinions as have seised our Minds should be brought to light, that by applying timely Remedies, they may be removed before they are gone too far; than by couching them over to let them run into a malignant Suppuration, which at last may turn

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to an incurable Gangren. It is alſo to be taken notice of, that if this Eccleſiaſtical Sovereignty be granted, there muſt of neceſſity be a double headed Sovereign Power in one State; it being evident, that Subjects would be obliged to acknowledge the Authority of this Eccleſiaſtical Judge in point of Controverſie, as well, and in the ſame meaſure, as they do the Authority of their civil Governours in civil Actions. And, ſince this Eccleſiaſtical Sovereignty has a different ſcope from that, for which Civil Societies were erected, it muſt conſequently be of a quite different nature, and make up a particular Sovereignty. Wherefore, if both theſe ſhould happen to be joined in one Perſon, he becomes thereby at once maſter over our Lives and Conſciences: But, if this Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction be lodged in another Perſon, he muſt either at the ſame time be acknowledged to have a Power of executing his Decrees, by his own Prerogative, or elſe to have only an Authority of giving Sentence, leaving the Execution of it to the civil Magiſtrates. If the firſt of theſe two be ſuppoſed, it is evident, that a double headed Sovereignty muſt carry along with it great Inconveniencies and Diſtractions; and if the latter, thoſe that exerciſe the Sovereignty in the State, muſt be look'd upon as Exeçutioners only to this holy Judge. All theſe Things duely conſidered, as they muſt needs occaſion great Convulſions in the State, ſo no man that is not beyond his Wits will be apt to imagine, (unleſs it be made appear by moſt evident Proofs) that Chriſt intended to introduce, by his

his Doctrine, ſuch pernicious Diſeaſes into civil Societies. For, tho' it is impoſſible, that no Controverſies ſhould be raiſed in the Church, like Chriſt himſelf has foretold it in the Parable by *Matthew*, *c.* 13. 24. And St. *Paul* in the 1 Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, *c.* 11. 19. Nevertheleſs, if any Controverſie does ariſe, he that is the firſt Author of it muſt of neceſſity maintain his Opinion, under a colour at leaſt of its being agreeable to the Scriptures. For, if any one ſhould pretend to introduce a new Article of Faith, without endeavouring to prove it out of the holy Scripture, he would be look'd upon as a mad Man, tho' he ſhould call to his aid all the Sophiſtications of the Philoſophers. And if he ſhould inſiſt upon the Authority of Traditions without the Scriptures, this would only ſerve to diſcloſe the weakneſs of that Foundation whereupon he builds his Doctrine. But, if any one ſhould make an attempt againſt any Article of Faith, received already as ſuch, in the Church, he is ſcarce worth taking notice of, unleſs he ſhould be able to alledge at leaſt, ſome ſpecious Reaſons out of the holy Scripture for his Opinion. And, in ſuch a caſe (eſpecially if his Endeavours ſeem to proceed from a real Love to Truth) he ought not to be abſolutely ſlighted, without being heard, and his Reaſons examined. So, that then the whole deciſion of the Matter muſt depend from a right Interpretation of the ſeveral paſſages in the holy Scripture relating to this Controverſie; And to find out this Interpretation, I ſee not any neceſſity, which obliges us to have recourſe to a Sovereign Power, or

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any infallible Authority, but only to such Means, as are most proper for the searching into, and finding out the genuine Sense of other Authors; *viz.* by a true Knowledge of the Tongue, and a diligent search into the nature and whole frame of the Christian Religion, and by duely comparing the Articles of Faith, and observing their Analogy and Connexion; Whosoever besides this, has a natural good Judgment, and is not prepossessed with Prejudice, private Interest, or Passion, it will be no such difficult Task for him, to find out the genuine Sense of the Scriptures, and to demonstrate it so plainly, that such as oppose him, will, by the consent of all Understanding People, be judged to be in the wrong. So did our Saviour at several times convince the Pharisees and Saduceans out of the whole Scripture, and by the force of his Arguments taken from thence, that they were not able to make any further reply. And why should it not be reasonably supposed, that in each Christian Church, there may be found a sufficient number of Teachers, capable of disproving such as pretend to introduce among them Innovations, and false Doctrines. But, supposing that these alone should prove insufficient, they may call to their aid those of the Neighbouring most famous Churches. From whence it appears, that there is no absolute Necessity of acknowledging a Judge General of Controversies in the Church. And, put the Case, that those that dissent from the Church, are so numerous, as to have spread their Doctrine all over the State, this Judge will prove

prove uſeleſs in his Office; For, if he pretends to have recourſe to violent means to make them renounce their falſe Opinion, they will in all probability oppoſe force to force; But, if he takes the other way, and endeavours to convince them of their Error by Arguments taken out of the holy Scripture; this may be done as well by other Teachers fitly qualified for their Office, than by ſuch a Judge General in the Church. Neither ought we to be ſo over timerous as to believe, that Errors ſhould in ſo much prevail over Truth, as to domineer always and every where over it, it being not to be queſtion'd, but that by help of the moſt clear-ſighted Teachers in the Church, theſe Clouds may be ſoon diſperſed, and Truth again appear in its ſplendor. I appeal to Experience, whether not a great many Hereſies by the only help of prevailing Truth, without the aſſiſtance of ſuch a Judge, or any human Force have by degrees dwindled away, and at laſt quite diſappeared. It muſt be confeſt, there are ſome erroneous Opinions, which being nouriſhed and maintained by a Temporal Intereſt, and certain Reaſons of State of ſome particular Churches, are not ſo eaſie to be ſuppreſſed. Of this kind are thoſe Controverſies, wherein the Proteſtants differ with the Papiſhes; All which, if duely conſidered, are ſo deeply entangled with the Intereſt of the Popiſh Monarchy, that it is impoſſible for the *Roman Catholicks* to recede an Inch from the point of the controverted Articles, without diminution of their Authority, and endangering their great Revenues; ſo, that all hopes of an Union

nion betwixt them and the *Protestants*, are in vain, unless the latter can resolve to submit themselves under the same Popish Yoak which they have shaken off so long ago. I cannot sufficiently admire that gross way of Arguing, made use of by the Papishes, when they talk of nothing else but the Authority of their Church, telling us, that, if we would but once acknowledge the same, all the Differences and Questions concerning the chief Articles of Faith would fall a-course, making themselves both Party and Judge, and pretending to give Sentence in their own Case according to their own Testimony. They always make use of this Sophism, that they attribute only to themselves the glorious Name of the *True Church*, excluding all orher Christians from it, but such as are of the same Communion with them. And, to back this pretence, nothing is more common among them, than to lay aside all manner of demonstrative Arguments founded in the Scriptures, and in lieu thereof, to find out new Methods (unknown to the Apostles) of Converting People; and to endeavour to establish their Authority by all manner of violence against those, that dare to maintain Truth in opposition to their Doctrine. For which reason God has threatned in a most peculia manner to destroy this Monster of a State.

An Example of Controversie composed in the times of the Apostles.

§. 37. The true Method of composing Controversies arisen in the Church, is taught us by what is set us as an Example of this kind in the *Acts*, c. 15. where it deserves our most particular Observation, that the Controversy then in question was concerning a main Point

Man

in the Christian Religion, *viz.* Whether a man might be saved without being circumcised according to the Institution of *Moses*. For S. *Paul*, in the Epistle to the *Galatians*, c. 5. 2. had positively declared: *If you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.* And it is very remarkable, that this Question was started in the very Infancy of the Church, when the Canon of the Church was not perfected, and there were not wanting living Testimonies of such as had received the Doctrine of Christ from his own mouth, and were endued with the Holy Ghost, and instructed with an Apostolical Authority. Neither is it to be doubted, but that *Paul* and *Barnabas* were endued with a sufficient Share of Wisdom and Understanding of the Holy Scripture, for the reducing of this Errour; as plainy appears out of the 5. verse of the above alledged Chapter, that they opposed such forcible Reasons against this erroneous Opinion, that those that were come thither out of *Judea*, were not able to contradict them: So they appealed to the Authority of the Church of *Jerusalem*, which being the Spring from whence the Christian Religion was derived into other Parts of the World, they hoped to be back'd in this Opinion by such of the Members of that Church, as did not without some Reluctancy brook the Abolishing of the *Jewish* Synagogue; and that they were not quite beyond their guess, but met with a great many there that were addicted to the same Opinion, appears out of the 5th Verse in the same 15th Chapter. To prevent therefore any further Disturbance, which Act. 15. V 24.

might be raiſed in the *Antiochian* Church by reaſon of this Controverſie, *Paul* and *Barnabas*, with ſome others, were deputed to go to the Chuch of *Jeruſalem*, to decide this Controverſie. When they came thither a Convocation was called, conſiſting not only of the Apoſtles and Presbyters, but alſo of the other Members of that Church, not excepting thoſe of the contrary ſide: After their Reaſons had been heard, the Caſe was in debate a conſiderable time; and at laſt the whole matter having been ſufficiently diſputed on both ſides, then *Peter* roſe up, not as an univerſal Judge, or who pretended to decide the Controverſie by Virtue of his Authority, but his Proceeding was by demonſtrative Arguments, telling them, what prodigious Effects had been wrought among the Gentiles by his
Act. 11 9 preaching the Goſpel to them, after the Viſion which appeared to him at *Joppe*; Where he thus argues: That ſince the Holy Ghoſt had in the ſame meaſure purified the Hearts of thoſe Believers that were uncircumciſed, it would be unreaſonable to put this Yoak upon the Neck of the Chriſtians, the more, becauſe they were not to be ſaved by Circumciſion, but through the Grace of the Lord JeſusChriſt. *Paul* and *Barnabas*, being of the ſame Opinion, did declare at the ſame time what Miracles and Wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them, which would not have been done, if they were to be taken for unſanctified, as being not circumciſed, or if Circumciſion was an eſſential Part of the Chriſtian Faith. After all had held their Peace,

Peace, that is to say, no body further appearing who could contradict them or oppose their Arguments, *James* at last arose, declaring that the Vision of *Peter* did agree to the Words of the Prophets, and that therefore it was his Opinion that such among the Centiles as did turn to Christ ought not to be troubled. But that they also in some measure might gratifie themselves, and to induce them not to fly the Conversation of such of the Gentiles as received the Christian Faith, it was thought fit that these should abstain from Pollution of Idols, from Fornication, from things strangled, and from Blood, all which was forbidden by the *Mosaic* Law, and partly disagreeable to the Law of Nature; as Fornication, which nevertheless was a common Vice among the Gentiles; the rest being things indifferent in themselves, might easily be let alone, rather than give Offence to a Brother. This having been approved of by common Consent, and as it appears, even by those that were of a contrary Sentiment before, a Synodical Epistle was writ to the Church at *Antioch*, in the name not only of those Apostles and Elders, but also of the Brethren of the Church of *Jerusalem*. *Judas* and *Silas* were deputed to carry this Epistle, who being arrived at *Antioch*, did not publish it in the nature of a Law, but, having delivered it to the Brethren, (from whom it met with a general Approbation) they exhorted them with many words to a due Observance of it.

Some Observations concerning the nature and use of Councils.

§. 38. If the whole matter be duly weighed, it furnishes us with several Observations, which may not a little contribute towards the Explaining the Nature of Ecclesiastical Councils. In the first place, it is most apparent, that these Councils are not such Bodies whose Authority is everlasting for the Government of the Church: But that they are extraordinary Convocations or Conventions, composed out of some selected and most eminent Men of the Church, who are called together for the composing certain Controversies arisen in the Church. And, because those Councils were very frequent in the Church from its Primitive times, this alone may serve as a convincing Argument, that the Church never acknowledged one infallible Judge for the deciding of Controversies. For, to what purpose were so many Heads set to work, if one single Person was sufficient and infallible in the Decision of them? And (what is yet more) if the Decrees of the Councils had only their obliging Force from his Confirmation. Furthermore, those that compose such a Council are not to be considered as Members of an Assembly or Colledge, who by the Majority of Votes can so absolutely determine the Question in hand, as to be obligatory to all Christians in general; Truth generally speaking, not depending from the Plurality of Suffrages; much less, can they pretend to a legislative Power vested in them so as to impose what Laws or Canons they please upon the Church. But, they may be considered no otherwise than Men deputed by the

the Churches for the examining the true Grounds of the Controverſies laid before them, and for ſearching for the Deciſion of them in the Holy Scripture; So that theſe Churches are not obliged to acquieſce in this Deciſion any further than they find it agreeable to the Word of God. For it may chance to fall out ſo that a Controverſie which appears at firſt ſight very intricate and difficult, afterwards being well weighed and the Reaſons thereof duly examined on both ſides, is very plain and eaſy to be determined. But if any moral Decrees are made by a Council, the ſame are to be taken to have no obliging Power, but what proceeds either from a preceding Commiſſion and Authority, or from the Approbation of theſe Churches; ſo that Councils have no coercive Power over the Church. I cannot but touch, by the by, upon this Head, *viz.* that this Aſſertion; *The Council is above the Pope*, is of ſuch a Nature as will eaſily gain credit with all that are guided by right Reaſon, or the Scriptures. For, who can be ſo ſtupid as not to be ſenſible, that a great many learned Men, who with joint labour apply themſelves to the ſearch after Truth, are to be preferred before the Judgment of one ſingle Perſon, and that oftentimes of ſuch a one, who has but a very indifferent inſight into the Holy Scriptures and Divinity. This ſeems to imply ſomewhat of a Contradiction, that this Point is aſſerted by the ſelf-ſame People, who make the Papal Chair the Center of the Church, and the Pope the Oecumenick Biſhop: For,

the *Romiſh* Church pretends to be a Monarchical State; but this Aſſertion of the Superiority of the Councils, ſavours moſt of an Ariſtocracy. But this Riddle may be unfolded in a few Words: The *Freneh* Clergy allows the Pope to be the Supream Head of the Church, as far as they find it ſuitable with their Intereſt. But whenever he attempts any thing againſt them, or the States Policy of that Kingdom, the old Song of the Liberty of the *Gallican* Church, and the antient Doctrine of the *Sorbone* is revived, which ſerves the *French* Clergy now and then for a Pretext, to perſuade the vulgar ſort of People, that the *Gallican* Church has not been polluted with thoſe groſs and abominable Errours as are introduced in the Church of *Rome*. The next thing to be conſidered is, that it is moſt evident, that if a Controverſie ariſes, which may be decided within the Body of one Church, there is no Occaſion for the Communicating in ſuch a Point with other Churches; And, that, in caſe one Church alone is not ſtock'd ſufficiently with able Teachers for the compoſing of the Difference, and therefore muſt call to its Aid thoſe of other Churches, it is ſuperfluous to call together a greater number than may be ſufficient for the accompliſhment of the Work. So did the Church of *Antioch* refer the whole Controverſie to thoſe of *Jeruſalem*, without giving the leaſt Trouble to thoſe of *Phenice* and *Samaria*, though their Deputies paſſed in their Way thither through both theſe Places. Beſides this, the Deputies that are ſent, ought to receive their Authority and Inſtruction

from

from their ſeveral Churches, whom they repreſent, becauſe no Church has without reſerve ſubmitted herſelf to the Determination of her Teachers, but only as far as their Doctrine is agreeable to the Word of God. Neither are the Words in the Epiſtle to the *Hebr.* c. 13. 17. to be underſtood any otherwiſe than with this Limitation. Beſides this, it is abſolutely requiſite that ſuch Perſons as have raiſed a Controverſie ſhould be heard in the Council, that their Reaſons ſhould be duely examined, weighed, and proceeded upon, according to the Rules preſcribed in the Holy Writ. And if the Controverſie does not barely concern a Point of Doctrine, but implies a Temporal Intereſt, thoſe that have any Share in it cannot pretend to a Power of deciding the Point in Prejudice of the adverſe Party. From whence it is evident, that the Points in queſtion betwixt the Proteſtant Church and the Papal Chair cannot be compoſed by any Council, their Difference ariſing not barely from Point of Doctrine, but about Domination, Temporal Dignities, and vaſt Revenues. Nor is there the leaſt Probability of any Compoſition betwixt theſe two Parties by way of Arbitration; For who is it that can pretend to decide ſo great a Point? Who is likely to be accepted of as an Arbitrator by both Parties? The Proteſtants, in all likelihood, will not be ſo fooliſh as to ſubmit themſelves and their Caſe to the Determination of any Aſſembly conſiſting all of *Roman* Catholicks their ſworn Enemies; nor can they have the Imprudence as to ask it. And as for

the Pope, he likes his Station too well, to put it to the Hazard of an Arbitration. But if an Assembly should be proposed to consist of an equal Number chosen by each Party, this Expedient would scarce take, it being to be feared that they would scarce keep within the bounds of Moderation, and that the Assembly would appear sometimes not unlike the Feast of the Centaures.

In what condition the Churches were under the Pagan Emperours.

§. 39. It having been hitherto demonstrated at large, that the Church is no State, we must consider in the next place, unto what kind of moral Bodies the Churches have the neareſt relation, as they were in primitive Times under the Pagan Princes. It is evident enough, That they were of the nature of Colledges, or such Societies, where a great many are joined for the carrying on a certain Business, under this limitation nevertheless, as not to be independent from the Civil Jurisdiction. Concerning the nature of the Colledges and Corporations, *Jacobus Cujachus* may be consulted before all others, 7 *Observ.* 30, and 16; and *Observ.* 3, and 5. And it is here very well worth our most particular Observation, that such Societies as were erected for the exercise of Religion were by Publick Authority allowed of in the antient *Roman* Empire. This is attested among a great many others, by *Athanagoras*, in the beginning of his Apology for the Christians, when he says: *It is by your Command, you greatest of Princes, that several Nations live according to their own Customs and Laws, and every one, without being controuled by any Penal Statutes, freely exercise the same Religion*

gion in which he was educated. And thus he proceeds immediately after: *All Mankind offer their Sacrifices, and uſe other Religious Ceremonies, according to the Cuſtom of their Native Country.* This Liberty of Conſcience was, among others, the true cauſe, why the Chriſtian Religion in ſo ſhort a time did ſpread it ſelf all over ſo vaſt an Empire, and why in the beginning, very few oppoſed its Progreſs, the Magiſtrates not thinking it belonging to their Province to intermeddle with it, And this is one Reaſon, why we never read of the Apoſtles having deſired leave from the Civil Magiſtrates to preach the Goſpel, or to plant a Church. Tho' another Reaſon may be given, why the Apoſtles were not obliged to ask leave from the Civil Magiſtrates for the Conſtituting of Chriſtian Churches; becauſe the Apoſtles had received their immediate Authority of Preaching the Goſpel from him, who is the *King of kings*, and by whoſe Command all Mankind were then called to repentance. From what has been ſaid, this rational Concluſion may be drawn; That the Apoſtles had not only a Power to plant Churches in all places, where they found their Auditors inclined to receive the Doctrine of the Goſpel, but that, alſo in all other places, whither this Doctrine was tranſplanted, the Believers might enter into ſuch a Society, or plant a Church upon their own accord, without any Commiſſion or Permiſſion for ſo doing, from the Apoſtles; but, that, purſuant to our Saviour's Expreſſion, it was ſufficient, if two or three were inclined to meet in his Name. If we trace the true nature of theſe Societies,

which

which are constituted by a free Choice and Consent of certain Men. we may easily find to contain, all of them, something resembling a Democracy, where such Matters as concern the whole Body of the Society are to be dispatched by common Consent, and where no particular Person can claim any further Power over the rest, than what he has received by their joint Consent. From whence it may be rationally concluded, that at the first beginning, the Power of Constituting Teachers, and other Ministers of the Church, was originally lodged in the whole Church, or, the whole Congregation of the Believers. And, tho' it is unquestionable, that in the first primitive Church, Teachers were constituted by the Apostles in a great many places; nevertheless the *Greek* word Κυρο τονειν, (which implies something of a Democracy, and is often used in the Scriptures in this Case) argues sufficiently, that this was not done without the Approbation of the Church. It would be a hard Task to prove, that the Apostles did constitute Teachers themselves in all lesser Towns, or that they preached the Gospel in all lesser Places and Villages. It seems rather probable, that the Gospel was published by the Apostles in great Cities, and other places of note; from whence it was communicated unto other Places; and, that such Churches, as were not provided with Teachers, Bishops, or Presbyters by the Apostles themselves, or their special Authority, used either to chuse those very Persons to that Function, who were the first Preachers of the Gospel among them,

or

or any others, whom they eſteemed to be endowed, before others, with the Gift of Teaching. If we conſult the Epiſtle of St. *Paul* to the *Romans*, it ſeems that the Goſpel had been taught at *Rome*, before ever *Peter* and *Paul* came thither; And the High Treaſurer of the Queen *Candaces*, who is generally believed to have firſt carried the Doctrine of the Goſpel to *Æthiopia*, and to have been the firſt Founder of the Chriſtian Churches in thoſe Parts, received no Ordination as a Biſhop or Presbyter from *Philip*, after his Baptiſm. Neither did Chriſt or his Apoſtles preſcribe any certain Form, to be uſed in the Ordination of Biſhops, as he did in the uſe of the Sacraments; which ſeems to prove that for the obtaining of this Function, there is nothing more required, than for the Perſon to be called by the Church, and to have the Gift of Teaching. It is not to be denied, but that the Ordination of Miniſters, and Impoſition of Hands by the Biſhops and Presbyters is a very laudable and uſeful Ceremony, and ought to be received as ſuch, with this reſtriction nevertheleſs, that the ſame need not to be deemed ſo abſolutely neceſſary, as if without it no Perſon ought to be taken for a true Miniſter of the Church; eſpecially ſince theſe miraculous Gifts which accompanied that Ceremony in the Infancy of the Primitive Church are many Ages paſt, become uſeleſs. The Church, like all other Colledges, have power to collect Stipends for their Miniſters, and to make Collections for the Uſe of the Poor; but in a different degree from that which belongs to Civil Magiſtrates or Sove-

Chap. 16.

Acts 8.

1 Tim. 4. 14.

reigns,

reigns, who levy Taxes. and have a Power to force their Subjects to a compliance with their Commands; But, in the Church this Power is founded upon the meer Liberality and free Consent of all the Believers in general, who being made sensible of their Duty of paying a Workman his Stipend, and relieving those in Distress, ought not to refuse such Acts of Justice and Humanity. It properly belongs to all Colledges as well as Churches, to have a Power to make, with joint Consent of their Members, such Statutes, as may conduce towards the obtaining the Ends of their Society, provided they do not interfere with the legal Rights of their Sovereigns. Of this kind are these Statutes, which St. *Paul* recommends to the *Corinthians* in his first Epistle, in the 7 *Chapt.* If any one acted contrary to these Rules, he deservedly was to receive Correction, or to undergo such a Penalty as was dictated by the Statute, and which was to be laid upon him not by Vertue of an Inherent Power in the Colledge, but pursuant to their Contract. And, tho' Colledges have not any Power or Jurisdiction over their Members, unless what is absolutely requisite for the obtaining the true end of each Society, or else has been granted to them by their Sovereigns; Nevertheless, it is often practised in these Societies, and may be done without prejudice to the Rights of their Sovereigns, that, if any Differences arise betwixt the Members of one and the same Colledge, these are composed by the Interposition and Arbitration of the rest of the Members of that Colledge or Society, to the End, that a

a Cor. 8. 2, 3. c. 2. 12, 13. c. 9. 5, 9, 7.

mutual

mutual good Correſpondency may be cultivated among them. In which ſenſe is to be taken the Admonition which St. *Paul* gives to the *Corinthians* concerning this point in the 1 Epiſtle, in the 6 *Chapter*, in the firſt and following *Verſes*. Laſtly, becauſe many Vices were at the time of the firſt publiſhing of the Goſpel in vogue among the Heathens, which were not puniſhable by the Pagan Laws, they being more encouraged to the obſervance of Moral Duty by the proſpect of Honours than by any civil Commands; And, the Chriſtians believing it more peculiarly belonging to themſelves to recommend and adorn their Profeſſion by a holy Life, and, by an innocent Converſation, to excel the Heathens, ſome Statutes were, at the very beginning, introduced into the Primitive Church, which were thought moſt convenient to correct all manner of Licentiouſneſs, according to St. *Paul*'s Direction: *If any one that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with ſuch a one do not eat.* 1 Cor. 5. 2. From whence it appears, that in the primitive Times, Church Cenſure was uſed in the Churches, all which may eaſily be ſuppoſed to have been done without the leaſt prejudice to the Sovereign Power, it being always for the Intereſt of the State, that Subjects ſhould lead an innocent Life. It is worth our Obſervation, that the Puniſhments inflicted by vertue of theſe Statutes, were of ſuch a nature, as might be put in execution without the leaſt prejudice to the Civil Government; ſuch were private Admonitions, publick Reprimands, and Church Penan-

Penances, the extream Remedy was Excommunication, by vertue of which, a Member of the Church was either for a time deprived from enjoying the benefit of the Publick Worship, or entirely excluded from being a Member of the Church. This being the utmoſt, unto which any Colledge can pretend, *viz.* entirely to exclude a Member of their Society. This Excluſion, tho' in it ſelf conſidered, of the greateſt moment, (ſince thereby a Chriſtian was deprived of the whole Communion with the Church) Nevertheles did not alter the Civil State or Condition of a Subject; But thoſe that were thus excommunicated ſuffered no loſs in their Dignities, Honour, Rights, or Fortunes. For, that the Church Cenſures ſhould extend to the real Prejudice of the civil Condition of any Subject, is not any ways requiſite for the obtaining the Ends for which the Church is Eſtabliſhed; Neither can it be ſuppoſed, that without defrauding Sovereigns of their Right, ſuch a Power can be exerciſed over Subjects, unleſs with their own Conſent, and by vertue of a publick Civil Authority.

Concerning the condition of the Church under Chriſtian Princes.

§. 40. The next thing which deſerves our Conſideration is, whether the Church is, and how far it received any Alteration from its former Condition, after Princes, whole Kingdoms, and States did profeſs the Chriſtian Religion? Where it is to be obſerved, That the Churches did thereby not receive any eſſential Perfection; it being evident, that the Chriſtian Religion could be exerciſed, and ſubſiſt without the State; and Commonwealths did not depend from the Chriſtian Religion;

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The ſcope of the Chriſtian Religion, and of civil Governments, being quite different in their own nature. For, *our* πολίτευμα, *our Converſation is in Heaven*; and, *if in this Life only we have hope in Chriſt, we are of all Men moſt miſerable.* For this Reaſon it was, that the Apoſtles were never forward to appear before Princes, tho' they might have obtained an eaſie Acceſs by their miraculous Deeds. So *Herod* was exceeding glad when he ſaw *Jeſus*, becauſe he hoped to have ſeen ſome Miracle done by him. But they were very cautious in this point, leſt it might appear to ſome, as if the Goſpel wanted to be maintained by Human Strength, or that perhaps thoſe Princes might pretend to a greater Authority over them, than was conſiſtent with the ſafety of the Chriſtian Religion. Notwithſtanding all this, the Chriſtian Religion does not in any wiſe impair or eccliſpe the legal Rights of Sovereigns, but rather confirms and eſtabliſhes the civil Power, as is apparent out of ſeveral paſſages in the holy Scripture. If it ſhould be granted that the Church was a State independent from any temporal Juriſdiction, the conſequence would be this, That the civil Power could not but receive a moſt remarkable Limitation and Diminution, and the condition of a Subject muſt receive a great alteration; whereas on the other hand, the condition of Chriſtians, or of Teachers in the Church (conſidered as ſuch) is neither aboliſhed nor altered, becauſe either the Prince, or the Subjects in general do receive the Chriſtian Faith, there being not the leaſt footſtep to be met withal in the Scriptures,

Phil. 3. 20. 2 Cor. 5. 2, 8. 1 Cor. 14. 19. Luke 23. 8. Mat. 22. 21. Joh. 18. 2. Rom. 13. 1 Cor. 15. 24.

ptures, implying any such alteration: Besides this, there is not any expres's Command in the New Testament, directed to Sovereigns, which entitles them to any particular Prerogative in the Church, like to that which the Kings of *Israel* had received in the 17 *Chap.* of *Deuteronomy*: From whence ariſes this concluſion, that, what right Sovereigns can claim in the Church, and Church Affairs, muſt be deduced, either out of the natural conſtitution of the civil Power, or out of the true Genius of the Chriſtian Religion, or elſe muſt owe its off-ſpring to the free conſent of the Church.

Churches do not alter their nature of being a Colledge.

§. 41. Out of what has been laid down, it appears firſt of all, that, if a Prince or whole Commonwealth, do receive the Doctrine of Chriſt, the Church does thereby not receive any other Alteration, as to her natural Conſtitution, but that, whereas ſhe was formerly to be conſidered only as a private Society or Colledge, yet ſuch a one as being ſubordinate to the Law, and therefore to be cheriſhed by the Higher Powers, who had no legal Right to diſturb, proſecute or deſtroy it; She now being put under the particular Protection of her Sovereigns, enjoys a greater ſhare of Security, and is beyond the reach of the Perſecutions of the Infidels. Notwithſtanding this, the Church is thereby not exalted from a Colledge to a State, ſince, by the receiving of the Chriſtian Religion, the civil Government does not undergo any Alteration or Diminution; On the contrary, Sovereigns looſe nothing of their legal Rights, neither are Subjects in any wiſe

wiſe abſolved from their Duties and Obligations. For it implies a contradiction, that a double Sovereignty, and two different ſorts of Obligations in the Subject ſhould be lodged in one and the ſame Commonwealth. It is a frivolous Objection, that the Church and civil Government have different Ends and Objects, not repugnant to one another; For, from thence is not to be inferred, that the Church muſt be a State, or that the Chriſtian Religion cannot be propagated, maintained or exerciſed, without the Church aſſume the ſame Power that belongs to the civil Government. In theſe places therefore, where the whole People and the Prince profeſs the Chriſtian Religion, the Commonwealth receives the Church into its Protection, and, tho' ſtrictly united, there is no colliſion or emulation betwixt them, nor does either of them receive any prejudice in their reſpective Rights, but without the leaſt Interference with one another, the Church remains a Colledge, whereof the Prince, and all the Subjects are now become Members. So, that each Subject, beſides the Perſon he repreſented in the State, has aſſumed that of a Chriſtian, and in this reſpect is eſteemed a Member of the Church. Neither is every one to be conſidered in the Church according to the Station or Dignity he bears in the Commonwealth, but, theſe Qualifications are, as it were, laid aſide there, and he is only regarded as a Chriſtian. So, that the General of an Army cannot claim any Prerogative to himſelf in the Church beyond the private Centinel. And it is paſt all doubt, that one and the ſame Man

may represent several Persons, according to the several Functions and Obligations belonging to him.

Princes are thereby not made Bishops.

§. 42. It is also, according to my Opinion, beyond question, that Kings, Princes, or other civil Magistrates, by receiving the Christian Doctrine, are not constituted Bishops or Teachers in the Church, this Function not properly belonging to every Christian, but only to such as have a lawful Vocation, and are fitly qualified for it. Besides this, the Royal Office and that of Teachers are of such a nature, that they cannot conveniently be Administred by one and the same Person, not, because of any natural repugnancy betwixt them, but that each of them is involved in such a multitude of Trouble and variety of Business, that it cannot rationally be supposed for one Man to be able to undergo such a Fatigue. It is no less evident, that Sovereigns, by becoming Christians, are not authorised to alter the Ministry of the Church, or to order it at pleasure, or to force the Ministers of the Gospel to teach any Doctrine which is not founded in the Scriptures, or to preach up Human Inventions for Articles of Faith. For, what, and how Ministers ought to Teach, is prescribed by God himself, who expects an exact Obedience in this Point, as well from Kings as other Christians. And it is to be considered, that whenever Princes receive the Christian Doctrine, the Teachers, notwithstanding this, remain in their former Station as to their Duty and Obligation to God, as well, as all the rest of their Christian Subjects, who having

received their Inſtructions, as to their Religion, only from God, without the aſſiſtance of their Sovereigns, theſe cannot claim any right to impoſe any thing of this kind upon them.

Concerning the Duty and Right of Chriſtian Princes of defending the Church.

§. 43. Notwithſtanding all this, it is not to be ſuppoſed that Sovereigns, by becoming Chriſtians, have acquir'd no peculiar Rights, or have not a more particular Duty laid upon them than before; There being certain Obligations, which owe their off-ſpring to the union of that Duty, which is incumbent to every Chriſtian, with that of the Royal Office. The firſt and chiefeſt of theſe Obligations ſeems to be, that Sovereigns ought to be Defenders of the Church, which they are oblig'd to protect not only againſt all ſuch of their Subjects, as dare to attempt any thing againſt it, but alſo againſt Foreigners, who pretend to be injurious to their Subjects upon that ſcore. And, tho' the Chriſtian Doctrine is not to be propagated by violence or force of Arms, and our Saviour has highly recommended Patience and Sufferings as peculiar Vertues belonging to Chriſtians, Princes are nevertheleſs not debarr'd from their Right of Protecting the Chriſtian Religion by all lawful means, and Patience ought not to take place here, except when no other lawful means can ſecure us againſt our Enemies. So we ſee that St. *Paul* ſaved himſelf from being ſcourged by declaring himſelf to be a *Roman*, and eſcaped the Fury of the *Jews* by making his Appeal to the Emperour. And our Saviour himſelf left this Advice to his Diſciples, That *when they were perſecuted in one City, they ſhould fly into another.* Acts 22. 25. Mat. 10. 23.

And, it being an incumbent Duty belonging to all Sovereigns, to defend their Subjects against all violence; they ought to take more effectual care that they do not suffer any Injuries for the Christian Religions sake; for, what could be more reproachful to a Christian Prince, than that his Subjects should be sufferers upon that account? The next care which belongs to Christian Princes, is, to provide necessary Revenues for the exercise of the Christian Religion. For as has been shewn before, that no other Patrimony belonged to the Primitive Church, but the Alms and free Contributions of the Believers, and that these cannot but be supposed to be very uncertain, the Ministers and Teachers in the Church run no small hazard of being exposed to want, if they have nothing else to rely upon, but the bare contributions of the Congregation, who being in some places poor, and Subject to other Taxes, are incapable of supplying their want. And, not to dissemble the Truth, after Princes and entire States have received the Doctrine of Christ, it would appear very ill, that, whereas they enjoy such ample Revenues, they would deal so sparingly with the Church, the more, because it is a general Maxim among Men, to value a Function according to its Revenues. What St. *Paul* recommends to the *Romans* in the 15th *Chapter*, v. 27. and in the 1 Epist. to the *Corinthians* 9. 11. ought to be the more taken notice of by Christian Princes, because they can with less difficulty, or any sensible injury to themselves, put it in practise in their Station, they having the management of the Publick

blick Revenues in their hands. It cannot be denied, but that too vaſt Revenues are not always uſeful to Miniſters of the Church, and prove ſometimes prejudicial both to Church and State; and that ſuch as make profeſſion of the Miniſtry of the Goſpel, ought not to make a Trade of their Function, or to think it their main Buſineſs to gather Riches, and take the Miniſtry for their By-work; nevertheleſs, if it be duely conſidered, that he who cordially (as he ought to do) applies himſelf to the Miniſterial Function, has no other ways left him to provide for his Family; and that the vulgar Sort ſcarce pay a due Reſpect to a Miniſter, unleſs they ſee him live handſomely and well; whereas he, who is ſtarv'd by his Function is the May-Game of the common People, unto whom may be applied that old Saying of the Poet; *That this Man appears to be the Servant of a poor and wretched Lord. Apparet ſervum hunc eſſe Domini pauperis miſerique.* Princes ought therefore to look upon this as one main part of their Devotion, to ſettle certain and conſtant Sallaries or Revenues upon the Miniſters of the Church, as much as may be, at leaſt ſufficient for their Maintainance. In the Old Teſtament the Prieſts were to live from the Altar, but thoſe of the beſt kind were brought to the Altar. Beſides this, Princes ought not only to take care of Church-Buildings, but alſo to erect and maintain Schools, which being the Seminaries both of the Church and State, if the firſt Rudiments of Chriſtianity be not implanted in the Schools, it cannot ſcarce be expected, that Men, when grown up,

Vid. Ep. Gal. 6. 6. 2 Tim. 2. 4.

ſhould receive much beneſit by publick Sermons.

Concerning the rights of Princes, as to Eccleſiaſtical Affairs. And firſt, of the general Inſpection.

§. 44. But among other Conſiderations, as to what Rights properly belong to Princes as to Eccleſiaſtical Affairs, it is evident, that, ſince by the Doctrine of the Goſpel the Civil Power is in no wiſe impaired, and a Prince cheriſhes a Church under his Juriſdiction, he legally claims a Right of having a general Inſpection over this as well as all other Societies; at leaſt, ſo far as to take care that nothing be tranſacted in theſe Colledges to his Prejudice. For Mankind being ſo perverſe in its Nature, that in Matters, even the moſt Sacred, if managed without controul, they ſeldom let it ſlip through their hands without a Stain; And that therefore it is ſcarce to be queſtioned, but the Chriſtian Doctrine is ſubject to the ſame Corruption, and that under Pretence of Religion many pernicious Deſigns may be hatched againſt the Intereſt of the Commonwealth. A Prince in whoſe Territories a Church is planted, if he afterwards enters into the Communion of that Church, has queſtionleſs a Right to examin what Matters, and in what Manner they are tranſacted in the Convention of their Presbyters, or in their Eccleſiaſtical Courts, if there be any ſuch among them; Whether they do not tranſgreſs their Bounds? whether they act according to the Civil Laws, or whether they do not aſſume to themſelves a Power to determine ſuch Caſes as properly belong to the Civil Juriſdiction? Of this Kind are Matrimonial Caſes, which without Reaſon, and upon very ſlender Pretences, the Prieſts have drawn un-

under their Juriſdiction, to the great Prejudice of the Sovereign Power; For, it being an unqueſtionable Right belonging to Sovereigns to conſtitute Laws concerning Matrimonial Caſes, according to the Law of Nature and of God, I cannot ſee any Reaſon why they have not a Right to determine Matrimonial Differences. And becauſe the Miniſters of the Church make uſe of Church-diſcipline, the Prince may make a legal Enquiry whether, under Pretence of theſe Rules preſcribed by our Saviour, they do not introduce Novelties, which may prove prejudicial to the State? And as theſe Enchroachments are no eſſential Part of the Chriſtian Doctrine, but rather to be looked upon like Spots which diſguiſe its natural Beauty; So, I cannot ſee with what Face it can be denied, that thoſe ought to be taken off, eſpecially by the Authority of thoſe whoſe Intereſt is moſt nearly concerned; unleſs they have Impudence enough to own, that the Chriſtian Religion may lawfully be miſapplied to By-uſes. And let it be granted, that every thing is tranſacted as it ought to be in theſe Conventions of the Presbyters, Conſiſtories or Epiſcopal Courts, why ſhould they be aſham'd or angry at their Sovereigns taking Cogniſance of their Proceedings. And this Right of Inſpection does never ceaſe after the Sovereign has once entred into the Communion of the Church, it being his Duty to take care that no Abuſes may creep into the Church, in proceſs of Time, that may endanger the State.

Concerning the Right of Princes, as to Church Miniſters.

§. 45. Becauſe the Right of Conſtituting Miniſters of the Church does originally belong to the whole Congregation the Prince muſt needs have his Share in it, as being a Member of the Congregation; I ſay his Share: For it is not reaſonable that a Miniſter ſhould be forced upon any Church againſt their Conſent, and without their Approbation, except it be for very weighty Reaſons. For, the Right of Conſtituting Miniſters in the Church does not belong to the Prince in the ſame manner, as it is his Prerogative to conſtitute Civil Magiſtrates and other Publick Miniſters of State, which being a part of the Sovereign Power, cannot be called in queſtion. But Teachers in the Church, conſidered meerly as ſuch, are none of the King's Miniſters, but Servants of Chriſt, and Miniſters of the Church, not Officers of the State. And becauſe, in the Primitive Church, Miniſters uſed to be conſtituted by Κειροτονίαν, or by the Suffrages of the Chriſtians, the Prince may lawfully claim his Vote in the ſame Church whereof he is a Member; But as for the other Churches under his Juriſdiction, they ought to be left to their free Choice, exept there be ſome prevailing Reaſons, which oblige the Prince to interpoſe his Authority; it being unjuſt, that a Miniſter ſhould be put upon a Church againſt their Will, if they can alledge any lawful Exception againſt him. For, a Teacher thus forced upon his Auditors, for whom they have neither eſteem nor Love, is likely to edifie but little by his Doctrine. Nevertheleſs, Sovereigns ought to have a watch-

watchful Eye over the Churches, and to take care that Perſons not fitly qualified for this ſacred Function, may not be promoted to the Miniſtry either by Simony or other unlawful Means: For though it is the Intereſt of the whole Church to provide againſt theſe Corruptions, Sovereigns are likely to do it with much better Succeſs than can be expected from private Perſons. They may authoriſe certain Perſons to be preſent at theſe Elections, and who, by their Authority, may prevent all manner of Diſorder or Corruption, and at the ſame time make a due enquiry, whether ſuch Perſons as are to be put into the Miniſtry are of an approved Life and Doctrine. And, becauſe the Miniſters of the Church do ſometimes act negligently or prepoſterouſly in their Office, which often proves the Occaſion of Scandal and Schiſm in the Church, Sovereigns may conſtitute over them Inſpectors, with an Authority to reprove, and ſometimes to puniſh ſuch as tranſgreſs their Rules. But theſe Inſpectors, being no leſs ſubject to human Frailties than other men, Care ought to be taken that their Authority be ſo limited as to be accountable of all their Proceedings, either to the Prince, or before a Conſiſtory authoriſed for that purpoſe, if they tranſgreſs their Bounds or treſpaſs upon the Miniſters of the Church. As all theſe maters do contribute to the maintaining of good Order in the Church, and may beſt be put in execution by the Sovereign Authority; So it is manifeſt, that Princes, as they are chief Members of the Church, may juſtly claim

1 Tim. 3 10.

Rom. 16. 17.

claim this Prerogative as properly belonging to their high Station and Princely Office.

Concerning the Right of calling together a Synod.

§. 46. In case of any Difference or Controversie concerning any Point of Doctrine which may sometimes arise in the Church, so, that the Teachers are divided in their Opinions, it belongs to the Sovereign Authority to take care that these Differences may be composed, not only as the Sovereign is a Member of the Church, but as he is the Supream Head of the Commonwealth; It having been frequently observed, that Differences of Opinions and Animosities of the Parties concerned, cause great Commotions in the State. Upon such Occasions Sovereigns have a Right to call together an Assembly of the most able Divines, and to authorise them to examine the Controversie, and to determine it according to the Tenure of the Scriptures; The Supream Direction of this Assembly ought to be managed by the Prince's Authority; For, since it can scarce be supposed that matters should be transacted there without Heats and Animosities, it will be both for the Honour and Interest of this Assembly, if by the Presence of certain Persons well versed in Business, these Heats be allayed, and matters carried on with an equal Temperament. Neither do I see how any one besides the Prince can lay claim to this Power of calling such an Assembly; for, put the case, that one Party should refuse to appear, and to submit unto the other's Direction, which way will they be able to compel them to it? And who is it, that can with less

Difficulty

Difficulty put in execution the Decrees of ſuch a Synod, than he, who has the Sovereign Power in his Hands? Tho' at the ſame time it ought not to be forgotten, that this Power muſt not extend it ſelf beyond its due Bounds, but be ſuitable to the Genius of the Chriſtian Religion. But, in caſe Divines out of other Countries are to be called unto this Convocation or Aſſembly, it is, I think, a plain caſe, that theſe cannot appear there without leave firſt obtained from their Sovereigns. And if a Council ſhould be called, conſiſting of ſelected Divines out of a great many Commonwealths, this cannot be done without a foregoing Agreement made betwixt thoſe Sovereigns that are concerned therein. For it is not allowable for Subjects of another State to come to us upon ſuch an Account, nor can ours go to them upon ſuch an Errand, unleſs by joint Conſent of the higher Powers. And ſince Sovereigns cannot claim any Juriſdiction over one another, there will be no place left for any Prerogative, but Matters muſt be tranſacted according to mutual Contract.

Their Right concerning Church-Diſcipline.

§. 47. For what Reaſons the Primitive Chriſtians did introduce Church Diſcipline, *viz.* to be diſtinguiſhed from the Heathens by their holy Life and Converſation, and to ſupply the Defects of the civil Pagan Laws, which did not reſtrain them from ſuch Vices as were abominable to the Chriſtians, has been ſufficiently explained before. This Reaſon takes no more place now, after whole Commonwealths as well as their Sovereigns are entred

entred into the Communion of the Christian Church; for there is not the same Occasion now to be distinguished from the Heathens by an unspotted Conversation, after the rooting out of the Pagan Religion, all Christians being under an equal Obligation to endeavour an unblemished Life. But, notwithstanding the general Conversion of whole Commonwealths to the Christian Faith, care ought to be taken, that Holiness of Life be not laid aside among Christians; from whence arises this Question: Whether it be better to make use of the antient Church Discipline now, in the same manner as it was practised in the Primitive times? Or, whether it be not more expedient to admit of some Alterations, after Sovereigns are entred into the Communion of the Church? The last of these two seems to be most probable; because this antient Church Discipline which was introduced for a certain time, to supply the deficiency of the Pagan Laws, and to amend their vicious Lives and Conversation, and was thus left to the direction of certain People, is not an Essential part of Christianity; and, besides this, carries this Inconveniency along with it, that it may easily degenerate into a kind of a pretended Soveraignty, and prove prejudicial to the Civil Power. And, as Soveraigns have a Right to provide against every thing that may be the probable cause of Convulsions in the State; so may this defect be supplied by the Civil Laws, and Vices may be suppressed by Civil Punishments. Neither do I see any reason to the contrary, why

Vices

Vices ſhould not be as eaſily corrected by Puniſhments preſcribed by the Civil Laws, as by Church-Cenſures; or, why the firſt ſhould not prove as effectual as the latter for the ſuppreſſing of Publick Scandals? It will perhaps be objected, That Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline has a much greater Influence over Chriſtians towards the amendment of their Lives, than Civil Puniſhments; becauſe the firſt penetrates into the Heart; whereas Civil Puniſhments do not touch us but ſuperficially: Unto this it may be anſwered, That Church-Diſcipline does not always anſwer this end, it being not to be doubted, but that ſome Men, tho' they undergo all the Church-Penances, retain in their hearts the ſame vicious Inclinations, or ſometimes grow more ſtubborn and bold. But if it be taken as an Expiation for our Sins in regard of God Almighty, it is to be obſerved, that if we pretend to an Expiation for any Treſpaſſes, which fall under the cognizance of Humane Laws, we muſt therein be directed by the Word of God, which does not preſcribe Church-Penance as a proper Satisfaction in this caſe. For our ſins are not remitted, becauſe we have undergone Church-Penance, but becauſe our Hearts are purified by the Blood of Chriſt, provided we, by the Faith, apply his Sufferings unto us. But, ſuppoſing it ſhould be thought moſt convenient, that ſome ſort of Vices ought to be corrected by Church-Diſcipline, the beſt Expedient would be, to leave it firſt to the determination of the Civil Judges, who, according to the Circumſtances of the Caſe, ought to ſend the Delinquents

to

to the Eccleſiaſtical Court, there to undergo the Church-Cenſure. For, Chriſtian Soveraigns have an unqueſtionable Right to determine, what ſort of Miſdemeanors are puniſhable by the Civil Laws, and which of them come under the Cognizance of Eccleſiaſtical Courts; and conſequently, to decree, what ſort of Church-Cenſure ought to be laid upon the Delinquents, according to the different Nature of the Treſpaſs; which may be put in Execution by the Miniſters accordingly. Concerning Excommunication, the ſame ought not to be put in Practice, but with this caution, that it ought not to be left to the diſcretion of Prieſts, ſo as to be inflicted by them at pleaſure; but this Power ought to be limited by certain Rules preſcribed by thoſe that have the Legiſlative Power in a State. For, in a Chriſtian Commonwealth Excommunication alters the Civil Condition of a Subject, and renders him infamous and deteſtable among his fellow-Chriſtians: And as it affects the Civil State of Subjects, Soveraigns, unleſs they will let others encroach upon their Prerogative, ought to determine concerning its Legality.

Concerning the Power of making Eccleſiaſtical Canons or Statutes.

§. 48. Since the Chriſtian Religion does not in any wiſe diminiſh the Rights of Soveraigns, theſe, if entred into the Communion of the Church, have a Power to examine, what Canons or Eccleſiaſtical Statutes are received in the Church; and if ſome of them are found ſuperfluous, or interfering with the Soveraign Power, to aboliſh the ſame; and if there appears any deficiency, to ſupply what is want-

ing

ing towards the maintaining a good Order, and the Glory of the Church (which however, ought not to be done without the Advice, at leaſt, of the chief Men of the Church) and laſtly, give to thoſe Statutes the force of Civil Laws. This Power nevertheleſs, of making Eccleſiaſtical Statutes, muſt be exerciſed with a great deal of caution, the ſame being limited to the outward form of the Church-Government, and to maintain its Order and Decency, Chriſtians being not to be over-heap'd with a vaſt number of Canons. For, thoſe that ſtretch the Power of Soveraigns to ſuch a pitch, as to make them the abſolute Judges of the Chriſtian Religion, and to attribute to them a Right of eſtabliſhing certain Articles of Faith by Civil Laws, or to annex to them a force equal to the Civil Conſtitutions, and to force upon their Subjects a certain Religion, under ſevere Penalties, or oblige them either to profeſs or to deny certain Points of Doctrine, which are controverted amongſt Chriſtians; Theſe, I ſay, act quite contrary to the true Genius of the Chriſtian Religion, and to the Method made uſe of by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, for the propagating of this Doctrine; They deſtroy the very Eſſential part of our Faith, which being a Gift of the Holy Ghoſt, and a Belief founded in our Hearts, is tranſmuted into an outward Confeſſion, where the Tongue, to avoid Temporal Puniſhment, is forced to ſpeak thoſe things which are in no wiſe agreeable to the Heart. This however admits again of a Limitation; For herein are not comprehended theſe Points, which proceeding from

Coloſ. 2. 16. 21, 22. 1 Tim. 4. 34.

from Natural Religion, are alſo contained in the Chriſtian Doctrine, and all of them imply a profound Reverence to be paid to the Supream BEING. For, it is beyond all queſtion, that thoſe that act againſt the very Dictates of Reaſon, ought to be ſubject to Civil Puniſhments, ſince they ſtrike at the very Foundation of Civil Societies: Such are Idolatry, Blaſphemy, Profanation of the Sabbath; where nevertheleſs great care is to be taken, that a due difference be made betwixt the Moral part of that Precept concerning the Sabbath, which is unalterable, and the Ceremonial part of it. Princes therefore at their firſt entrance into the Communion of the Chriſtian Church, might Lawfully deſtroy the Images and Temples of the Idols, and the Groves, and other Meeting-places dedicated to their ſuperſtitious Worſhip. Neither can it be called in queſtion, but that Chriſtian Soveraigns have a Right to inflict Civil Puniſhments upon ſuch as revile the whole Syſtem of the Chriſtian Religion, and ridicule the Myſteries of the Chriſtian Faith, at leaſt, they may Baniſh them the Country. But for the reſt, it is in vain to believe, that the true enlightning of our Mind, and the inward conſent to ſuch Articles of Faith as ſurpaſs our Underſtanding, can be procured by violent means, or temporal puniſhments. For, ſuppoſing you force a Man to diſſemble his thoughts, to ſpeak contrary to what he conceives in his own Opinion, let his Confeſſion be never ſo formal, and his Geſtures never ſo well compoſed and conformable to certain preſcribed Rules,

Rules, this has not the leaſt affinity with true Religion, unleſs he at the ſame time does feel an inward motion, and hearty compliance with what he profeſſes. Neither ought People, according to the true Genius of the Doctrine of Chriſt, be enticed to receive the Chriſtian Religion by Temporal Intereſt, Honours, or other ſuch like Advantages; for, Chriſt did promiſe, that thoſe that followed him, ſhould receive their Reward in the Life to come, but fore-told them nothing but Croſſes and Tribulations in this. And, thoſe that embrace any Religion out of a Motive of Temporal Advantages, do plainly ſhew, that they have a greater Value for their own Intereſt, than Religion. And certainly, ſcarce any body, that has but common ſenſe, can perſwade himſelf, that ſuch a ſort of Worſhip can be pleaſing to God Almighty. Sovereigns being not conſtituted for Religion's ſake, they cannot under that colour exact from their Subjects a blind Obedience in matters of Religion, it being unqueſtionable, that if Subjects ſhould blindfold follow the Religion of their Sovereign, they cannot by all his Authority be aſſured of their Salvation; from whence it is evident, that, in caſe any Subject be fully convinced, that he can out of the Holy Scripture diſcover any Errors, which are crept into the Church, even that by Law eſtabliſhed (eſpecially concerning any Principal Point of Faith) he neither can, nor ought to be hindered in his deſign by the Sovereign Authority, before his Reaſons be heard, and well debated in the preſence of

the best and ablest Judges; and, if by them he be legally and plainly convicted of his Error, then, and not before, ought he to be silenced. To force People into the Church by the bare Civil Authority, must needs fill the Commonwealth with Hypocrites, who cannot be supposed to Act according to the Dictates of their Consciences. For, since in Religious Matters an absolute Uniformity betwixt the Heart and Tongue is required, how can it otherwise be, but that such as profess a Religion disagreeable to their Opinion, should never be satisfied in their Consciences, when they consider, that they impose upon God Almighty.

What Prerogatives belong to Sovereigns, as being Protectors of the Publick Tranquility.

§. 49. The Care of preserving the Publick Peace, belonging in a most peculiar manner to Sovereigns, has furnished some with a specious Pretence to affirm, that since differences in Religion cause frequent Convulsions in the State, and it is to be deemed one of the greatest Happinesses of a Government, if its Subjects, in general, are of one Religion, all means, tho' never so violent, may be put in execution to extirpate these Differences in Religion. They alledge, that as much more precious our Souls are before our Bodies, the more Sovereigns are obliged to be watchful over them; and, that the true Love which a Sovereign bears to his Subjects, can never be more conspicuous, than when he takes effectual care of their Salvation. These, it must be confess'd, are very specious Pretences, and have sometimes had such powerful influence over Princes, who were else naturally not inclined to Severity,

rity, that they have nevertheleſs by theſe plauſible Arguments been prevailed upon to aſſiſt with their Authority the cruel Deſigns of Prieſts. It will therefore not be beyond our ſcope, to make a ſtrict Enquiry what account ought to be made of theſe ſo ſpecious Reaſons in a well conſtituted Government. In the firſt place then, it is to be conſidered, that it has been foretold by our Saviour, that there ſhould always be in the Church Weeds amongſt the Wheat; that is to ſay, that there ſhould be falſe Doctrines raiſed in the Church; and theſe, according to the Commands of our Saviour, were not to be extirpated Root and Branch, but to be reſerved for the Day of Judgment. For a Sovereign that takes to ſuch violent courſes, may make a havock among his Subjects, which commonly proves equally pernicious to the Innocent and Guilty; nevertheleſs, he will find it impracticable quite to aboliſh all Errors and Differences in the Church. Never did any body ſhew a greater Love to Mankind than our Saviour, who ſacrificed himſelf for our Salvation; Yet he made uſe of no other ways to propagate his Doctrine, than Teaching, when he might have commanded Twelve Legions of Angels to force Mankind to Obedience. How can a Prince be eſteemed to follow the Foot-ſteps of Chriſt, who makes ſuch profligate Wretches as the Dragoons his Apoſtles, for the Converſion of his Subjects? That Pretence of the Love of Sovereigns toward their Subjects, let it be never ſo ſpecious, he ought not under that colour endeavour to ſubvert or alter

the Method of propagating the Christian Doctrine, according to the true Genius of the Christian Religion. Besides this, it is not absolutely necessary to maintain the Publick Tranquility, that all the Subjects in general should be of one Religion, or, which is the same in effect, the differences about some Points in Religion, considered barely as such, are not the true causes of Disturbances in a State; but the Heats and Animosities, Ambition and perverted Zeal of some, who make these Differences their Tools, wherewith they often raise Disturbances in the State. Such turbulent Spirits ought to be curbed, and care to be taken so to tye up their Hands, as that they want Power to influence the Minds of such Subjects, as otherwise would be well satisfied, to enjoy peaceably a Liberty of Conscience. And what should move a Prince to disturb his good Subjects meerly upon the score of Differences in Opinion, as long as they live quietly under his Goverment? For, supposing their Opinion to be erroneous, it is not at his, but their own Peril, and they alone must be answerable for it. For, in my Opinion, Sovereigns are entrusted with the Sword, wherewith to dissect Controversies, as *Alexander* did with the *Gordian* Knot. But, that it may not be objected as if I intended to encourage all sorts of Heresies and Licentiousness, I do declare, that this is far different from my purpose, but that on the contrary, it is to be wished, and ought to be endeavoured, to procure but one Faith and Religion in a State, and especially such a one as is absolutely agreeable

agreeable to the Doctrine of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, contained in the Holy Scripture; ſuch a one as cannot but contribute towards the maintaining of the Publick Tranquility. For, I do not think, that all Uniformity in Religion is equally capable of procuring that Union; neither can the Pagan Religion, *Mahometans*, *Arians*, *Anabaptiſts*, and that of *Antichriſt* himſelf, claim that Prerogative, but only the true and antient Religion contained in the Holy Scripture. For, this is only to be deemed the truly Antient Religion, which is derived from the pure and genuine Spring of the Primitive Chriſtian Religion. As among the *Jews*, ſuch only could boaſt to follow the true foot-ſteps of Antiquity, as proved their Doctrine out of the Books of *Moſes*. All what degenerates from the Nature of its genuine Spring, tho' back'd by the Traditions of ſome Ages, being only to be look'd upon as an inveterate Error. Princes being then Protectors of the Publick Tranquility, have an Authority to inſpect what Canons are received into the Church, and to cauſe them to be examined according to the true Tenure of the Holy Scripture; and this care is not to be committed to the management of a few, who may perhaps be ſwayed by Faction or Intereſt, but to all ſuch as have a ſolid knowledge of the Holy Scripture. If every thing be found conſonant to its Rules, then may a Sovereign by his Authority Command this Doctrine to be Taught both in publick and private. But where there is not any Publick Form of Religion eſtabliſhed in a Commonwealth, it is the

Sovereign's care, that one may be compoſed by the aſſiſtance of ſuch as are well verſed in the Holy Scripture, which being approved of by the general conſent of his Subjects, ought to be profeſſed by all, and all thoſe eſpecially, who pretend to the Miniſtry, are to be tyed up to its Rules. This form of Worſhip being once received, , a Prince may juſtly deny his Peotection to all ſuch as will not comply with it, unleſs he find it to be againſt the Common Intereſt of the Commonweal. If any one ſhould undertake to contradict this Publick Form, eſpecially in ſuch Points as are the Heads of the Chriſtian Religion, he ought to be admoniſhed to deſiſt, his Reaſons, if he has any, to be examined, and when convicted of his Error, to be ſilenced; if all this prove fruitleſs, he may lawfully be baniſhed. For, ſince, according to the Doctrine of the Apoſtles, we are to avoid the Converſation of Hereticks, it would be unreaſonable that a whole Society of Men ſhould fly from one or a few capricious Perſons; So that he or they ought to ſeek out for a new Habitation, after they have been legally convicted of their Error; for fear they ſhould ſpread their erroneous Doctrines ſurther than may be conſiſtent with the Publick Safety. But we allow no other Puniſhment in ſuch a caſe, except their Doctrine ſhould amount to Blaſphemy.

Concerning Tolerating of ſeveral Religions in a State.

§. 50. Notwithſtanding what has been alledg'd there may be ſuch a juncture of Time & Circumſtances, that Sovereigns may, nay ought with a ſafe Conſcience to tolerate ſuch of their Subjects

jects as are of a different Opinion from the Eſtabliſhed Religion. For, it may ſo happen, that the number of the Diſſenters is ſo great, as not to be expelled without great Prejudice to the State, and, not without danger to the Commonwealth, if they ſhould ſettle under another Government. For that common Saying of a certain Sort of Men, that 'tis better to have a Country lie waſte, than to have it inhabited by Hereticks, ſavours of Barbarity, if not Inhumanity. And a certain Prince who ſaid, that he would rather walk out of his Territories with nothing but a Staff in his hands, than to ſuffer it to be inhabited by Hereticks, may well paſs for one of the moſt bigotted Zealots in Chriſtendom. For the Doctrine of the Goſpel is not deſtructive to civil Society, neither is thereby the leaſt Obligation laid upon Princes, to propagate Religion by violent and deſtructive means, or to undertake more in that behalf, than belongs to them as Protectors of the publick Tranquility; they may therefore with a ſafe Conſcience ſupercede ſuch violent ways, by which the State either is endangered or weakned; eſpecially, ſince neither our Saviour did make uſe of them himſelf, nor commanded any thing like it to his Apoſtles. On the other hand, thoſe that expect to be tolerated in a State, ought by all means to endeavour to live peaceably and quietly, and as becomes good Subjects, they ought not to Teach any Doctrine which ſavours of Sedition and Diſobedience, or to ſuffer ſuch Principles to be fomented in their Congregations, as may prove deſtructive to the Prerogatives of their Sove-

reigns. For, there is not the leaſt queſtion to be made, but Princes have a right to rout out ſuch as propagate theſe Doctrines, they having not the leaſt relation to Religion, but are like ſpots, wherewith ſome turbulen Heads beſpatter the Chriſtian Religion. Beſides this, there is another duty incumbent to Sovereigns over a State, where more than one Religion is tolerated; *viz.* to keep a watchful eye over them, that the Diſſenting Parties do not break out into extravagant Expreſſions about the Differences in Religion, theſe being the Fuel that enflames them into Animoſities, which oftentimes prove the ſpring of Factions, Troubles, and inteſtine Commotions. A much greater Obligation lies upon Sovereigns to tolerate Diſſenters, if they, when they firſt ſubmitted to the Government, had their Liberty of Conſcience granted them by Contract; or have obtain'd it afterwards by certain Capitulations, any following Statutes, or by the fundmental Laws of the Land; all which ought to be ſacred to Princes, and to be obſerved by them with the ſame Circumſpection, as they expect a due Obedience from their Subjects. No Opinion concerning matter of Religion ought to be declared Erroneous, before it be duely examined, and the Parties convicted, eſpecially if they are ready to prove the ſame out of the Fundamental Articles of the Chriſtian Faith; And great care is to be taken that ſuch a Deciſion be not left to the Management of their Adverſaries, who being perhaps guided by ſelf Intereſt, oftentimes are both Accuſers and Judges. There are not a few Politicians, who

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are of opinion, that Sovereigns may with a ſafe Conſcience give Protection to their Subjects, tho' of an erroneous Opinion, provided it be for the benefit of the Commonwealth; eſpecially if care be taken, that they do not draw away others into the ſame Error. For, ſuppoſing the eſtabliſhed Religion both in point of Doctrine and Morality, to excel all others, it is to be hoped that the Diſſenting Parties may be in time brought over to it, rather than to be feared, that they ſhould ſeduce others; Beſides, that it may contribute to the encreaſe of the *Zeal* and Learning of the eſtabliſhed Clergy, it being ſufficiently proved by Experience, that in thoſe places and times, where and when no Religious Differences were in agitation, the Clergy ſoon degenrated into Idleneſs and Barbarity.

§. 51. Furthermore, as Sovereigns in all other Matters of Moment ought to act with great Circumſpection; ſo, eſpecially in matters of Religion, they cannot proceed with too much caution, an injuſtice of this nature, being the moſt ſenſible of all that can be done to a Subject. For what can be more abominable, than to let Subjects ſuffer unjuſtly for their Faith in Chriſt, and that perhaps for no other reaſon, but, becauſe ſome others out of ſelf Intereſt, cannot agree with them in Opinion. And, if a Prince, who prompted by his own cruel Inclinations tyranniſes over his Subjects, is odious to all the World, how much more abominable appears a Prince, who acts the part of an Executioner, and is made an Inſtrument by others to fulfil their cruel De-

Sovereigns in matters of Religion ought not to be miſguided by Flatterers.

Designs against their Fellow Subjects? All Christian Princes therefore, as they tender their Consciences, ought to avoid all manner of Extreamities in Matters of this Nature, which ought never to be undertaken, unless they be well instructed beforehand in every particular Point. A Prince ought not only to be satisfyed with, or rely entirely on what is represented to him by his Clergy, (tho' never so pious in outward appearance;) there being too many Instances to be given, that the best of Princes, by their own Inclinations, abhorring all manner of Cruelty, have, by the Instigation of over-zealous Clergy-Men, turn'd the most cruel Tyrants: We scarce ever read of any Prince, who undertook to decide Controversies in Physick, or other Sciences (except he had attained to a particular Knowledge in these Matters) and, why should Sovereigns be too forward in deciding Religious Differences, which are of much greater Moment, (the eternal and temporal welfare of Millions of People do depend thereon) unless they be very well instructed in every thing that has any relation to it? And, since Princes very rarely bestow sufficient Time and Pains in being fully instructed in Divinity, it is to be wished, that they would be byassed by their own natural Understanding, rather than be influenc'd by the Opinions of others. As for an Instance, in those Controversies which are betwixt the *Protestants* and *Papists*, there are such evident Signs, from whence it is a difficult matter for a Christian Prince to discern, which of these two ought to be preferred before the other.

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For, if it be considered, that the *Protestants* are so far from forbidding the reading of the holy Scripture to the Laity, that on the contrary, they exhort them to it, and make the Scriptures the Touchstone of their Doctrine, and the true Judge of their Controversies; That the *Protestants*, trusting upon the goodness of their own Cause, do not forbid the reading of *Popish* Authors, but allow them to be publickly sold, as being confident, that the weakness of their Arguments cannot have any influence, even over an indifferent Understanding; it cannot but seem very strange, why in the Church of *Rome*, the Laity is not allowed the reading of the holy Scripture, nay, that they leave no stone unturn'd, to suppress the Validity of the holy Scripture; so, that in those places where the Inquisition is in vogue, a Man may with less danger be guilty of Blasphemy, Perjury, and other the most enormous Crimes, than to read and examine the Mysteries of the holy Scripture. On the other hand, what a clamour do they make about Traditions, and the Prerogatives of the Church, which Title they claim as belonging, in a most peculiar manner to themselves, and notwithstanding the same is not allowed them by others, they assume to themselves the Authority of giving Judgment in their own Cause. It is very well worth the Consideration of a Prince, that they will not allow our Books to be read among them, and especially, how careful they are in keeping them from the Knowledge of Great Men, tho' belonging to the Communion of their Church. Who is so

ſo ignorant as not to know, what great Difficulties and Obſtacles were to be ſurmounted before it could be obtained; that the *Augſburgh* Confeſſion was read to the Emperour *Charles* V. All which, taken together, are moſt evident Proofs to any unbyaſſed Perſon, that the *Proteſtants* act like Men, as relying upon the goodneſs of their Cauſe; but the *Roman Catholicks*, as miſtruſting themſelves, and fearing, that if their Doctrine ſhould be examined, according to the Tenure of the holy Scripture, and out of the *Proteſtant* Writtings, the ſame would ſcarce bear the Touchſtone. It may alſo be taken into conſideration, how far different the Intereſt of the *Roman Catholicks* Party is from that of the *Proteſtants*: For, tho' both Parties with equal Zeal in Publick pretend to the Honour of God, and the Truth of the Goſpel; and it is not to be denied, but that a great many among the *Roman Catholicks*, are very Zealous for the ſame; nevertheleſs, if we duely conſider the Nature of Mankind in general, it may eaſily be ſuppoſed, that they aim at ſomething more; And, what this ſomething is, is eaſily diſcernable, if we make a due compariſon betwixt the Clergy of both Parties. Among the *Proteſtants*, the greateſt part of the Clergy are ſo ſtinted in their Revenues, as to give them no opportunity of living in State; what Reſpect is paid them, is on the account of their Function as being Teachers, their power very ſeldom reaches beyond their Revenues, which are very moderate, and oftentimes very mean. Both their Perſons and Eſtates depend from the Authority of their

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Sovereigns, neither have they any where elſe to ſeek for Protection. On the contrary, in what Pomp and affluence of Fortune does the *Popiſh* Clergy live? Unto what hight have they not exalted their Power in *Europe*! Have they not ſo ordered their Matters, as to be almoſt independant from the Civil Magiſtrates? What likelihood can there be in all this, that the *Proteſtants* ſhould be as much concerned for a Temporal By-Intereſt as the *Popiſh* Clergy? For, whereas, they firſt can expect no more than what is alloted them already, the latter have no leſs in view than vaſt Riches, and the Poſſeſſions of whole Kingdoms. All theſe Matters duely conſidered, may be convincing Proofs, that all the Clamour which the *Popiſh* Clergy makes againſt the *Proteſtants*, is of the ſame nature with that of *Demetrius* at *Epheſus*, when he exclaimed againſt St. *Paul*, Love and Meekneſs being the products of the Chriſtian Faith; the Cruelties of the *Popiſh* Clergy exerciſed againſt *Proteſtants*, ought to be ſuſpected by Princes, and ſerve them as a forewarning; what good is to be expected from thoſe that proſecute with ſo much Barbarity all ſuch, as oppoſe their Pride and Ambition? After the Perſecutions were ceaſed in the Primitive Church, the *Arians* were the firſt, who ſhew'd their teeth to the Chriſtians; But they would have bluſhed for ſhame, if they ſhould have attempted to propagate their Religion by force of Arms, and ſuch other cruel Perſecutions as are now in vogue among the *Popiſh* Clergy. If we were not ſufficiently convinced, that the Spirit of Envy is not the

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Spirit of Chriſt; we may be inſtructed as to this Point by our Saviour himſelf (when
Luk. 9. 54, 55, 56. he rebuked *James* and *John*, who would have fire come down from Heaven) in theſe words: *Ye know not, what manner of Spirit you are of; For the Son of Man is not come to deſtroy Mens lives, but to ſave them.* The Sword of Chriſt is not girted on the ſide of Men,
Rev. 19. 15. but goes out of his Mouth, and in all the holy Scripture, there is not one paſſage, where the Church of Chriſt is ſaid to be drunken with the Blood of Hereticks; but it is ſaid of
Rev. 17. 6. the Whore of *Babylon*, that *ſhe is drunken with the Blood of the Saints, and with the Blood of the Martyrs of Chriſt.*

Sovereigns are often encroached upon in their rights under a religious pretext.

§. 52. Laſtly, Since Sovereigns ought to be jealous of their own Prerogatives, they may without Injuſtice make an Enquiry, whether the Proteſtant or the Popiſh Religion be moſt encroaching upon their Authority, and which of theſe two be moſt conſiſtent with the Civil Government. For whenever the Civil Power bears any diminution under a Religious Pretence, it is then high time for Sovereigns to look about them, to examine upon what Foundation theſe Pretenſions are built; it being evident, that Civil Goverment was introduced before the Chriſtian Religion, and that therefore it ought plainly to be demonſtrated, how Civil Authority came to be diminiſhed by the Chriſtian Religion. Now, if we look into the Conſtitution of the Popiſh Clergy, it is manifeſt, that by many ſteps and degrees, and by various Artifices and Intrigues, they have at laſt patch'd up a Potent State of their own;

own; and that their Supream Head, for these many Ages past, is possess'd of great Territories, and Acts as a Sovereign; and, not only this, but also obtrudes his Authority upon all such as profess the *Roman* Catholick Religion. For, they don't think it sufficient that the whole Clergy have their dependance from him, but he pretends to an Absolute Authority of determining all Matters of Faith, by which means he is sure to guide the Minds of the People where ever he pleases. If any thing in the World is destructive to the Civil Powers, it must of necessity be this, when a Party inhabiting their Territories, disown their Jurisdiction and depending from a Foreign Power; deny the Authority of their Natural Prince over them, or at least acknowledge it no longer than they think it convenient. If Neighbouring States are commonly the most jealous of one another, must it not be look'd upon as a great Solocism of State, to permit such as depend from a Foreign Jurisdiction to abide in the Commonwealth? It is next door to take Foreign Garisons into our Forts, or to allow a Foreign Force to Encamp in the midst of our Dominions. And this Mischief seems to be the more pernicious, when the Revenues, by which the Grandeur of this Eccleſiastical State is maintained, are squeezed out of the Subjects of any Prince, and the best part of his Territories exhausted; whereas on the contrary, these Leeches are not only freed from all manner of Taxes, but also pretend to a Legislative Authority, so as to inflict Punishments upon the Subjects, and to Absolve them from

from their Allegiance due to their Sovereigns. I cannot ſee how Princes, without great Prejudice to the Commonweal, can allow the leaſt Authority over their Perſons, to the Clergy; For, if the Prince and they happen to jarr together, the poor Subjects pay for it with a Vengeance, when they are to ſerve two Maſters of a contrary ſide at one time; and the Taxes muſt fall the heavier upon the Subjects, where the Clergy are exempted from all Contributions. Laſtly, is it not a heavy Burthen to the Subjects, to be ſubject both to an Eccleſiaſtical and Temporal Juriſdiction? The former being generally the moſt ſevere; as is moſt evident in *Spain* and *Italy*, where the Courts of Inquiſition are in vogue. It being therefore beyond all queſtion, that all theſe things are practiſed by the *Roman* Catholicks, but in no wiſe by the Proteſtants, ſuch Princes, as, being miſled by the Popiſh Clergy, endeavour to extirpate their Proteſtant Subjects, Act not only contrary to Juſtice, but even againſt the very Dictates of right Reaſon. What has been objected by ſome, *viz.* That Proteſtants have not been altogether free from the imputation of raiſing Diſturbances in the State, and having joined with a Foreign Power, ſcarce deſerves an Anſwer; For, this is not to be imputed to Religion it ſelf, but rather, to ſome dangerous Juncture, and other Circumſtances, which often prove the occaſion of dangerous Commotions in a State; Or elſe, the Papiſts have firſt begun the Dance, and what Wonder is it, if ſome Proteſtants, to avoid their cruel

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Deſigns againſt them, have endeavoured to repel the Fury of their Adverſaries; and when they found themſelves inſufficient, have ſought for Aid by Foreign Princes. For, as it is the greateſt piece of Injuſtice to compel Subjects by force of Arms to any Religion, ſo theſe may juſtly defend their Religion by force of Arms, eſpecially if they live under a Government where they have a Right belonging to them of Protecting their Liberties againſt any Invaders.

§. 53. Laſt of all, it very well deſerves to make an Enquiry who it is that has the Power in the Commonwealth to amend ſuch Errors and Abuſes, as are crept into the Church, either in Point of Doctrine, Morality, or Church-Government? Or, which turns to the ſame Account, who has the Right of Reformation? Where firſt of all it is unqueſtionable, that there is no occaſion of a Reformation, where the Clergy, upon Admonition, deſiſt from theſe Abuſes; like as when a Creditor, upon Summons, is paid by his Debtor, ought to ſupercede his Action againſt him. But, put the caſe, that the Clergy either abſolutely refuſe, or from time to time protract to deſiſt from ſuch Abuſes, ſo that there is but two ways left to be choſen; either patiently to ſubmit to their capricious Humour, or elſe certain Perſons in the State, being damnified by theſe Abuſes, have a Right and Power to controul their Extravagancies. Thoſe that maintain the firſt Poſition, muſt prove, that the Clergy has been inveſted with ſuch an unlimited Power by God Almighty, to impoſe

Concerning the Right of Reformation.

upon Christians, even the most absurd Matters, at pleasure, without being liable to be controuled by any Power upon Earth; Or, they must demonstrate, that Christians have absolutely submitted their Faith to the Clergy, and that in such a manner, that every thing which should be ordained by them, should be received for Truth with all imaginable submission and patience. But, because it would savour of too much Impudence to pretend to the first, it lies then at their Door to prove, that the Clergy, and their Supream Head, did never err, either in Point of Doctrine, Ceremonies, or Church-Government; All which having been sufficiently demonstrated to the contrary, by the consent of several Christian Nations. We are of Opinion, that when any Abuses are crept into the Church, which are prejudicial to the Commonwealth, or the Authority of Sovereigns, these, by vertue of their Sovereign Right and Prerogative, have a Power to abolish and reform all such matters as interfere with the Publick Good and Civil Authority. At the same time, it cannot be denyed, but that in a case of such moment it may be very convenient to acquaint the People with the Reasons of such a Reformation, lest they should be surprized at it, and look upon it as an Innovation, which might prove of dangerous consequence. And, if especially, the Rights of the People are invaded by these Abuses, this Reformation ought to be undertaken with the knowledge and approbation of the Subjects. It may be objected, that by such a Reformation Divisions are raised

raiſed in the Church. But this is to be look'd upon as a matter of no great Weight; ſuch a Diviſion being not to be imputed to thoſe that rectifie ſuch Errors, but to thoſe that obſtinately refuſe to return into the right Path, either out of Self-intereſt or Pride. There is nothing more obvious out of the antient Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, than that ſuch as were plainly convicted of an Error, uſed to be excluded from the Communion of the Church. But ſuch as begin a Reformation upon a good and legal Account, can under no Colour whatſoever be accuſed of Schiſm or Rebellion. For, thoſe are Rebels, who by forcible Ways endeavour to withdraw themſelves from the Allegiance due to their lawful Sovereign: Whereas all ſuch as free themſelves from Abuſes unjuſtly impoſed upon them, without their own conſent, or any Divine Authority, rather deſerve to be ſtiled defenders of their own Liberty and Conſcience; eſpecially, if theſe Abuſes and Errors are dangerous to their Souls. For, no Teacher, no Biſhop, no Convention whatſoever, was ever inveſted with an abſolute Power of domineering over Chriſtians at pleaſure, ſo that no Remedy ſhould be left againſt their Uſurpation. It cannot therefore but be look'd upon as a great piece of Impudence in the *Roman Catholick* Party, when they aſſume to themſelves wholly and entirely the Title of the Church, with excluſion to all others, that are not of the ſame Communion. For, they either muſt pretend their Church to be the Univerſal, or elſe a particular Church. By the Univerſal Church, is, according to the

Tenure of the Holy Scripture, understood the whole multitude of the Believers, whereſoever diſperſed in the World, whoſe Union conſiſts in this, That they acknowledge one God, one Redeemer, one Baptiſm, one Faith and Eternal Salvation; from whence only are excluded ſuch as pretend to diſſolve this Union; that is, who deny the true God, and his Son Chriſt, and who do not agree with the very Fundamental Principles of the Chriſtian Religion. This is the true Catholick Church, not the Pope with his Eccleſiaſticks and Ceremonies, who impoſe their Authority upon Chriſtendom. And, ſince thoſe that, for weighty Reaſons have withdrawn themſelves from the Church of *Rome*, may and do believe a true Baptiſm, a true God and Father, a Faith agreeable to the Holy Scripture, it is evident that the *Roman* Church is not to be taken for the Univerſal Church; and that a Chriſtian may be a Member of the true Catholick Church, in a right ſenſe, notwithſtanding that he never was in the Communion of the *Roman* Church, or, upon better Conſideration, has freed himſelf from its Abuſes and Errors. But the Popiſh Religion, conſidered as a particular Church, as it ought to be, (tho', if we unravel the bottom of its modern Conſtitution, it will eaſily appear, that the whole frame of that Church is not ſo much adapted to the Rules of a Chriſtian Congregation, as to a Temporal State; where, under a Religious pretext, the chief aim is to extend its Sovereignty over the greateſt part of *Europe*) thoſe, that have withdrawn themſelves from that Com-

Communion, are no more to be counted Rebels, than our Modern Philoſophers are to be taken for Fools and Madmen, becauſe they differ in Opinion from *Ariſtotle*. For, all Believers, who adhere to the true Faith, are, in regard of their Head Jeſus Chriſt, of an equal degree, and aim all at the ſame End. And Chriſt having given this Promiſe to all Believers; *That where two or three were gathered together in his Name, there would he be in the midſt of them*; no Church can claim any Prerogative by reaſon of the number of its Adherents. What the *Romaniſts* alledge for themſelves out of the Apoſtolical Creed, is ſo full of abſurdity, that it contradicts it ſelf, *viz.* out of theſe words: *I believe one Holy, Catholick, and Apoſtolical Church*; For, except they could cajole us into a belief that theſe words imply as much as to ſay: There is but one true Church upon Earth, which is the *Roman Catholick*, there being no other beſides that, I cannot ſee what Inference can be drawn from thence to their Advantage; Beſides, that the very ſenſe of the words contradict this Interpretation, if Reaſon, the Holy Scripture, and Experience it ſelf did not ſufficiently convince us to the contrary. It is beyond contradiction, that there is but one true Church upon Earth, there being but one God, one Chriſt, one Baptiſm, and one Faith; But, concerning one Point, many Errors and Abuſes may be committed. Neither have the Popiſh Party any reaſon to brag of a particular Holineſs, eſpecially concerning theſe matters, wherein they differ from the Proteſtants. The word *Catholick*, Mat. 18. 20.

relates here to a Doctrine, not to a Sovereign State, whose Authority is to be Universal over Christendom, so that that Church is to be esteemed a Catholick Church, which contains every particular Point of Doctrine in the true sense, as they are proposed in the Holy Scripture; And those are called Hereticks, who only profess some particular Points out of the Holy Writ, (for such as absolutely reject it, are counted Infidels and Reprobates) but either deny, or explain the rest in a wrong and perverted sense. How can the Popish Clergy therefore assume the Title of the Catholick Church, before they have, and that without contradiction, proved every Point of their Faith out of the Holy Scripture? Or, exclude us Protestants from that Title, till they have proved that our Doctrine is contrary to it? Lastly, It is called the Apostolical Church, as being founded upon the Doctrine of the Apostles. And the true Church loses nothing of its intrinsick Value, whether it has been planted by the Apostles, or whether the Apostolical Doctrine has been transmitted to them by others.

Whether Subjects, without the Consent of their Sovereigns, may separate themselves from an Erroneous Religion?

§. 54. But it is not a very difficult Task to introduce a Reformation in Religion with the mutual Consent of Sovereign and Subjects; so it may be questioned, whether Subjects may attempt a Reformation, when their Sovereigns, and the whole Clergy, or at least the greatest part of them, do not acknowledge their Error, but rather pretend to maintain it? In this case, it is our Opinion that, provided these Errors do touch the Fundamental Points

Points of our Faith, ſuch Subjects, as by the Grace of God, and the Light of his holy Spirit have attained the true Knowledge, may ſeparate themſelves from the Communion of that Church, without the conſent of their Sovereigns or the Clergy. For, every body being accountable to God for his Religion, and anſwerable for his own Soul, whoſe Salvation cannot abſolutely be committed to any Body elſe; and, a Chriſtian, in Matters of Faith, being not altogether to rely upon his Sovereign or the Clergy, (at leaſt no farther than their Doctrine is congruous with the holy Scripture.) It is undeniable, that Subjects may ſeparate themſelves from the Communion of that Church, which is profeſſed by their Sovereign and Clergy, provided they can make it evidently appear, that ſuch a Church is infected with groſs Abuſes, and dangerous Errors. For, the Church is a Colledge, whoſe Members are not kept in Union by any Temporal Power, but by the Union of the Faith; and, whoſoever relinquiſhes that, he diſſolves the ſacred Tye of the Believers. Beſides that, it is not abſolutely neceſſary for our Salvation, that the Church be compoſed of a great Number, but the ſame may be obtained, either by a greater or leſſer Number of the Believers. Neither can this Separation prove in the leaſt prejudicial to the Sovereign Authority, it being ſuppoſed, that thoſe who have ſeparated themſelves adhere to the true pure Doctrine of the Goſpel, free from all Poiſon, and Principles dangerous or prejudicial to the Government. For, civil Society was not inſtitu-

ted for Religion's ſake; neither does the Church of Chriſt participate of the nature of a Temporal State; and therefore a Prince that embraces the Chriſtian Faith, does not thereby acquire an abſolute Sovereignty over the Church or Mens Conſciences. So, that, if, notwithſtanding this Separation, the Subjects pay due Allegiance to their Prince in Temporal Affairs, there is no reaſon ſufficient which can oblige him to trouble them meerly upon the ſcore of their Conſciences. For, what loſs is it to the Prince, whether his Subjects are of the ſame Religion with himſelf, or of unother? Or, (which was ſuppoſed before) whether they did maintain the ſame Errors, as he does? The caſe indeed, would be quite different, if they ſhould endeavour to withdaw themſelves from their Allegiance, to ſet up a ſeparate Society without his Conſent; tho' it is undeniable, that there are ſome Caſes of Neceſſity, when this civil Tye or Allegiance may be diſſolved, as for Inſtance; when Subjects, for want of ſufficient Protection from their natural Prince, are ſo hardly preſſed upon by a more Potent Enemy, that they are forc'd to ſubmit to his Power. And granted the Power of Sovereigns in the Church to be much greater, than in effect it is, Subjects are nevertheleſs bound to take care of their Souls, whoſe Salvation is to be preferr'd before all other things, in regard of which they may ſeparate themſelves from an Eſtabliſhed Religion, provided they are convinced of its Errors. For, that Subject who ſacrifices his Life for his Prince, does doubtleſs a glorious Action; but what Prince

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can be ſo unreaſonable, as to expect that his Subjects ſhould Sacrifice their Souls to the Devil for his ſake. That Prince therefore who does trouble his faithful Subjects for no other reaſon, but becauſe they cannot conform to his Opinion (eſpecially if they can maintain theirs out of the Holy Scripture) commits an Act of Injuſtice; Nay, I cannot ſee how he can with Juſtice force them out of his Territories. It is true, he may refuſe to receive Hereticks into his Dominions, unleſs it be for Reaſons of State; Neither can a true Believer take it amiſs, if he is not permitted to ſettle in a Commonwealth govern'd by Hereticks. For, the Right of Naturalization belongs to Sovereigns, which they may refuſe and give to whom they think it convenient. But, as it is certainly the greateſt Injuſtice in the World, to force an in-born Natural Subject, who has ſettled all his Fortunes in a Commonwealth, meerly for his Religion's ſake, without being convicted of his Error, out of his Native Country, to the great detriment and danger of himſelf and his Family. So, if a Subject inclines voluntarily to leave his Native Country, either to avoid the Frowns of his Prince, or the hatred of the Clergy and Common People, and to ſerve God with more freedom according to his own Conſcience, it ought not to be refuſed by his Sovereign. I remember there is a certain Proverb uſed among the *Germans*, viz. *He that Commands the Country, Commands Religion.* But this cannot be applied to the Princes of the *Roman Catholick* Religion, who cannot lay any Claim to it, it being evident that

that the Popiſh Clergy do not allow any ſuch thing to theſe Princes; And, as to what concerns the Proteſtant Eſtates of *Germany*, it cannot be denied, but that they made uſe of this Pretenſion againſt the Emperor at the time of the Reformation, which however ought to be thus interpreted; That they denied the Emperor to have any Power of intermedling in the Affairs relating to their own Dominions, not, that only they claim'd it as belonging to the Rights of Sovereignty to impoſe any Religion, tho' never ſo falſe, upon their Subjects; notwithſtanding all which, there are not wanting Examples, that Princes have acted conformable to this Proverb with their Subjects. A Prince, who troubles his faithful Subjects meerly upon the ſcore of Religion, commits a groſs Error; no Chriſtian Prince being obliged to propagate his Religion by forcible means; provided his Subjects ſtand firm to their Allegiance to him, he being not anſwerable in particular for their Religion. It cannot be taken notice of without aſtoniſhment, how both in former times and our Age, ſome Princes, who were naturally not enclined to Cruelty, having in other reſpects given great Proofs of their Clemency, yet have been prevailed upon to raiſe the moſt horrid Perſecutions againſt their Subjects, barely upon the ſcore of Religion. But it has been foretold in Holy Scripture, that this Fate ſhould attend the Chriſtian Church, when it is ſaid, Rev. 18. 3. That *Mighty Kings upon Earth ſhould commit Whoredom with the Whore of Babylon.* And, who is ignorant that Gallants will often commit

mit the moſt barbarous Acts, meerly to pleaſe their Harlots? All true Chriſtians therefore ought couragiouſly to oppoſe the Threats and Attempts of this Beaſt, committing the reſt to Divine Providence. And, as for ſuch Princes and States, as have ſhaken off the Yoke of Popiſh Slavery, if they ſeriouſly reflect, how their fellow-Proteſtants are perſecuted, and in what barbarous manner they are treated, will, queſtionleſs without my Advice, take ſuch meaſures, as may be moſt convenient for to ſecure themſelves from ſo imminent a Danger.

The

The following

ANIMADVERSIONS

Made by the Author, upon ſome Paſſages of a Book, Entituled,

A POLITICAL EPITOMY,

Concerning the Power of Sovereigns in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs.

WRITTEN BY

ADRIAN HOUTUYN,

Having a very near Relation to the former TREATISE, it was thought fit to Inſert them here by way of

APPENDIX.

IT is a Queſtion of the greateſt moment, which, if rightly determined, tends to the Benefit of Mankind in general, *viz.* Unto whom, and under what Limitations the Power in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs is to be aſcribed in the State? If the old Proverb, *That thoſe who chuſe the middle way are commonly the moſt ſucceſsful*, has not loſt its force, it may without queſtion, be moſt properly applied in this Caſe, where both Extreams are equally dangerous, ſince thereby the Conſciences of Subjects are left to the arbitrary diſpoſal, either of the Pope of *Rome*, or their Sovereigns. There

There having not been wanting, both in the laſt and our Age, Men eminent for their Learning, who have with very ſolid Arguments oppoſed the Tyranny of the firſt, it is but reaſonable for us, to take heed, that ſince we have eſcaped the danger of *Scylla*, we may not be ſwallowed up by *Charybdis*. For, as ſcarce any body that is in his right Senſes can go about to deny, that the Sovereign Power owes its original either to God, or the general Conſent of the People; So it is a matter mutually advantageous both to the Prince and Subjects, to underſtand, how far this Power is limited in the State, that the firſt may not tranſgreſs their due Bounds, and, inſtead of being Fathers of their Subjects, prove their moſt dangerous Enemies. *Adrian Houtuyn* a Civilian in *Holland*, having in a Treatiſe, called, *A Political Epitomy*, inſerted ſeveral Aſſertions tending to the latter of theſe two Extremes, and it having been obſerved of late, that this Book has been recommended by ſome *Doctors* in the Law, to the great detriment of young Students; I thought it not amiſs to make ſome Animadverſions upon his LXIII, and following SECTIONS, which may ſerve as a Guide to the younger Sort, leſt they, under the Cloak of aſſerting the Prerogatives of Sovereigns, may be miſlead into the latter of theſe Extremes, and attribute that to the Prince, which God has reſerved as his own Prerogative, and thus, irrecoverably, play the Prodigal with their own Liberty and Property.

This Author ſpeaking concerning the Prerogative of Princes, *Sect.* LXIII, runs on thus:

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He has an uncontroul'd Power over all External, Eccleſiaſtical Affairs, which are not determined in the Holy Scripture. He alledges for a Reaſon, becauſe that Power is granted to Sovereigns at the ſame time when Subjects ſubmitted, themſelves and their Fortunes to their Diſpoſal. But it ought to be taken into Conſideration, that certain Matters belonging to the external Exerciſe of Religious Worſhip have ſo ſtrict an Union with the internal Part, that, if the firſt be not diſpoſed in a manner agreeable to this inſeparable Tye, the latter muſt of neceſſity undergo ſuch Alterations, as are inconſiſtent with its Nature. And, ſince Mr. *Hontuyn* do's not leave the internal Part to the Diſpoſal of Sovereigns, how can the exterior Worſhip be ſubmitted to their meer Pleaſure, conſidering this ſtrict Union betwixt them? Beſides this *General Submiſſion*, he ſpeaks of admits of Limitation, in regard of that End, for which Civil Societies were Inſtituted, which is, the mutual defence againſt Violences: From whence it is evident, that there are certain Matters, belonging to every private Perſon, derived from the State of natural Freedom, which were not abſolutely left to the Diſpoſal of Sovereigns, at leaſt, no further than they were neceſſary to obtain that End. Religion having not any relation to this End, it is not to be imagined, that Subjects did ſubmit their Religion to the arbitrary Pleaſure of Sovereigns. And, it being unqueſtionable, that Subjects may exerciſe certain Acts belonging to them by Vertue of an inherent Right, derived from the free State of Nature, and independent from their

their Sovereigns, it may rationally be concluded, that, when Subjects did ſubmit themſelves, in Matters of Religion, to their Sovereigns, it was done with this Suppoſition, that both the Prince and Subjects were of one and the ſame Religion; and that the external Exerciſe of Religious Worſhip was not left to the Diſpoſal of the firſt, any further, than in ſuch Matters as are indifferent in regard of the internal Part of it. What is alledged concerning the the *maintaining a good Order, and avoiding of Confuſion*, it is to be obſerved, that this is not the main End, for which Civil Societies were Inſtituted, nor has it any relation to it, but only thus far, as it may be inſtrumental to maintain the Publick Tranquility.

As to *N.* 2. It is to be obſerved, that, becauſe Prieſts have a dependance from the Civil Power in certain Reſpects belonging to its Juriſdiction, this does not involve Religion (conſidered as ſuch) under the ſame Subjection. The following words ought alſo to be taken notice of: *A Chriſtian Prince commands over the Church, as being a Colledge, and repreſenting one ſingle Perſon in the Commonwealth. The Church, thus conſidered, is a Civil Society or Body Politick, founded upon the Publick Authority and Power, and ought to be regarded, as being in the ſame condition with other Colledges and Bodies Politick; and in this Senſe a King is the Head of the Church in his Dominions.* Whoever will conſider the real difference betwixt the Church and Commonwealth, muſt needs find as many Errors, as there are words here. For, becauſe a Prince has the Sovereign Juriſdiction in a Com-

Commonweath, conſiſting of Chriſtian Subjects, no inference is to be made, that therefore he may, in the ſame degree, exerciſe his Sovereignty in the Church, as in the Commonwealth, and that in the ſame Senſe, he may be called, *The Supream Head of the Church, as of the Commonwealth.* 'Tis true, the Church is a Society, but not a Body Politick, founded upon the Publick Authority, but owes it Original to a higher Principle, having not, like other Colledges, its dependency from the State. What is alledged out of *Titus*, 2. 9. *Coloſ.* 3. 20, 22. *Rom.* 13. 3, 4. 1 *Pet.* 2. 14. is ſtrangely miſrepreſented to evince, that Eccleſiaſtical Matters are dependent from the abſolute Pleaſure of Sovereigns. What Follows might alſo very well deſerve ſome Animadverſions, if it were not beyond our ſcope at preſent.

N. 13. It is a groſs Error, That, *as a Conſequence of this Sovereign Power in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs*, he attributes to them, *the Titles of Paſtors, Miniſters, Heralds of God, Biſhops, Prieſts, and Apoſtles.* Pray, with what Authority, and with what ſenſe? For, the Duty belonging to Sovereigns, which entitles them to the name of *being the Guardians of both Tables of the Decalogue, and of being the Foſter-Fathers and Defenders of the Church*, is of a far different Nature from what he would inſinuate here. And, if it be not to be left to the abſolute Judgment of the Clergy it ſelf, with excluſion of the reſt of the Members of the Church, to determine in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs, what is agreeable to the Word of God, how can this Judgment belong to the Sovereign

reign alone, without allowing a ſhare to the reſt of the Members of the Church?

Theſe words in the §. LXIV. *Each Sovereign may eſtabliſh what Religion he pleaſes in his Dominions*, ought not to be let paſs by without a ſevere Correction. The Reaſon alledged is very frivolous: *Becauſe all Publick and external Actions depend from the Publick Authority.* Is this your Aſſertion, good Mr. *Houtuyn*, that Princes may impoſe what Religion they pleaſe upon their Subjects, and by their abſolute Authority make it the eſtabliſh'd Religion, with excluſion to all others, who, if not complying, muſt, forſooth, fly the Country? What Religion they pleaſe, do you ſay! the the Pagan, Falſe, Fictious, or Superſtitious, it matters not which. From whence, pray, was this Power derived to Sovereigns? Not certainly from God, except you can ſhew us a Divine Authority for it. Not from the common conſent of thoſe that entred into Civil Societies; Commonwealths not being inſtituted for Religion's ſake, and of a later date; beſides, that ſuch a Power is not requiſite for the attaining that end, for which Civil Societies were eſtabliſh'd. Neither is it left to the bare pleaſure of any Perſon, tho' conſidered as in the Natural ſtate of Freedom, to profeſs what Religion he pleaſes: But, ſuppoſing it was, no Inference can be made from thence, that the ſame may be forc'd upon others. The diſtinction he makes betwixt the *internal and external Religion*, muſt alſo be taken with a great deal of Circumſpection, leſt ſome People might perſwade themſelves, that it is in-

different what Religion a Man profeſſes in outward ſhew, provided he be ſatisfied as to the internal part of it. Furthermore, it is abſolutely falſe, that all Publick Actions, that is, every thing done in Publick in the Commonwealth, owes its Original to the Sovereign Power; there being ſeveral things to be done by Subjects in publick, depending meerly from that Liberty belonging to them in the Natural ſtate of Liberty, or from God's Command, or from a certain Power granted to them by God Almighty.

It is no leſs falſe, That all exterior Actions depend from the Civil Authority; For, according to Mr. *Houtuyn*'s Opinion, the Doctrine of Divinity, and the Confeſſion of Faith, as comprehended in a certain form, are to be reckoned among thoſe exterior Actions. Mr. *Houtuyn* is much in the wrong, when he pretends to draw an Inference from thence; that, becauſe it belongs to Sovereigns to take care, that their Subjects may be well inſtructed concerning what Opinion they ought to have of God, as the Eſtabliſher of Juſtice; they therefore have a Right of diſpoſing (in an Arbitrary way) of revealed Religion, and to declare any Religion whatſoever, which pretends to Revelation, the Eſtabliſh'd Religion in the Commonwealth. It is a much groſſer Miſtake yet, when he aſſerts: That *any Religion eſtabliſh'd in a State, tho' never ſo falſe, contributes to the Publick Tranquility of that Commonwealth.* It is poſſible that a Religion defective in ſome Points, may nevertheleſs lead People into the way of Salvation; but thoſe that contain falſe

Doctrines

Doctrines of God and his Attributes, are incapable of producing that Effect. The Publick Tranquility, founded upon such false Opinions, will be very unstable, and may with more ease, or at least with the same conveniency be obtained by the true Doctrine; especially if it be taken into consideration, that, tho' it be possible that such Impostures may beguile the giddy-headed Multitude, they cannot always pass for currant among Men of a sound Understanding: It is to be remembred, that the Southsayers at *Rome* cannot forbear laughing, when they meet another of the same Profession. We must beg Mr. *Houtuyn*'s Pardon, if we question his Authority, when he pretends to perswade us: That *Faith*, which he is pleased to call *every ones private Religion, independent from any Temporal Power*, will not be impaired by a Man's professing any other Religion, established by the Sovereign Authority; and he leaves it to the discretion of those Civil Governours, which of all Religions they will be pleased to establish in their Dominions, whether that of the *Japoneses*, of the *Brachmans*, *Mahometans*, *Jews*, or *Christians*; and among all those that pretend to the Christian Name, such a one as may be most agreeable to their own Fancy. I much question, whether he will meet with many Tools, that will take his Word for it. A great part of Christendom did look upon it as a thing insufferable, that the Pope of *Rome* should set up for the great Arbitrator of Christendom in matters relating to the Christian Faith, tho' his Pretences did not reach further than to force

one Religion upon the World, which he knew was most likely to turn to his own Advantage: But now it seems it has pleased God, that Sovereigns should be invested with a Power of establishing any Religion at pleasure; and it being beyond question, that there are several Religions which have not the least relation to one another, they may, with the same Right, at several times, declare, several distinct Religions, nay, even those that are quite opposite to one another, the establish'd Religion, and nevertheless every one of these must be accepted, forsooth, as the true Religion. The next Consequence will be, that Sovereigns, having a Right of defending and altering the establish'd Religion, and to punish such as trespass against it, one Prince will have no more Right to cherish and maintain one Religion, but his Successors may, with the same Right, abolish it, and punish such of his Subjects as adhere to it. So that according to the Doctrine of Mr. *Houtuyn's* Gospel, the establish'd Religion will be settled upon the same Foundation with some Statutes, which may be enacted and repeal'd by Sovereigns at pleasure.

In §. LXV. He entirely, and without limitation, ascribes to the Prince the Power of *Constituting Ministers of the Gospel, in the same manner as if they were Ministers of the State.* But in the Commonwealth of the *Jews*, regulated according to God's own Institution, no such Power was granted to their Kings; Neither had the Apostles themselves, (tho' the most general Teachers that ever were (as being

being ſent to Preach the Goſpel to all the World) their Authority of Teaching from any Temporal Sovereigns. Neither can it be proved, that the Church, at the time, when Sovereigns firſt embraced the Chriſtian Faith, did transferr this Power of conſtituting Miniſters of the Goſpel, without limitation, to thoſe Princes; tho' at the ſame time it is not to be denied, but that Sovereigns have a conſiderable ſhare in it. His Argument taken from *the care Parents ought to have of the Salvation of their Children*, does not reach to what he pretends to prove; for, ſays he, Princes being the Publick Fathers of the Commonwealth; *it belongs to their Princely Office, to provide for the Eternal Salvation of their Subjects.* For, beſides that, the Title of *Father of the Commonwealth* is a Metaphorical Expreſſion, the Fatherly and the Regal Office depend from a quite different Principle, and the care to be taken of Children of a tender Age, is of another Nature with that which ought to be employed for the Safety of a whole People; neither were Sovereigns inveſted with the Supream Authority to enable them to procure Eternal Salvation to their Subjects, God having preſcribed other ways and means for the obtaining of it. It cannotbe denied, but that a Prince muſt not be regardleſs of this Care, nevertheleſs ought the ſame not to reach beyond its due Bounds, but muſt be effected by ſuch Methods as are approved of in the Holy Scripture, and ſuit with the true Genius of the Chriſtian Religion; Wherefore, it is in vain to attribute to Sovereigns a Power of

obtruding any Religion, at pleasure, upon their Subjects; it being beyond question, that not all Religions are conducing to obtain Eternal Salvation. So *Abraham*, the Father of Believers, did not impose upon his Children what Religion he thought most convenient, but he charged them to walk in the ways of the Lord, such as were manifested to them in the Holy Scripture. What St. *Paul* says, 1 *Tim.* 2. 2. is very well worth taking notice of, *viz.* That the chief care of the Supream Governours shall be, so to Rule over their Subjects, that they may live under them, not only honestly, but piously; this being the way to Eternal Salvation. It is to be observed, that those Princes, for whom the Apostle enjoined the Christians to pray, being Pagans, made but little account of Piety, especially of that belonging to the Christians; but it was thought sufficient for the Christians to enjoy the common Benefit of the Publick Tranquility under their Protection, the rest being left to their own care. So we read that the Poet's enjoyment of his Muses, was owing to *Augustus Cæsar's* Protection; nevertheless the Emperor did not concern himself about the Rules of Poetry. Furthermore, it is a very gross way of Arguing, when he Asserts; That, *the Commonwealth and Church are both one and the same thing under a Christian Prince, whose Subjects also profess the Christian Religion, the only difference being in respect of their different Qualifications: They being in the Commonwealth to be considered as they are Subjects, in the Church as Believers.* It seems, Mr. *Houtuyn* looks upon that Difference to be

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of little moment, which ariſes from divers Moral Qualifications, and includes different Obligations, and is founded upon another Legal Principle. It is confeſs'd, that in ſuch a caſe where the Head is not differing in his Natural Conſtitution from the Rights and Power belonging to him, the reſt of the Members, tho' differently conſidered under divers Qualifications, are nevertheleſs to be look'd upon as one and the ſame Society. As for inſtance: If a Prince puts himſelf at the Head of all his Subjects upon an Expedition, theſe, tho' they may be conſidered either as Soldiers or Subjects, yet do not differ in any Eſſential Part; As for Example: The People of *Iſrael*, when going upon their Expedition under the Conduct of *Joſhua*, was the very ſame that afterwards, under his Protection, enjoyed and inhabited the Country of *Canaan*. But the Church and Commonwealth, tho' compoſed out of the ſelf-ſame Perſons, do not only differ in their very Foundation, but alſo a Sovereign cannot claim the ſame Right and Name of being the Supream Head of the Church in the ſame ſenſe, as he is the Supream Governour of the State. For, in the latter he exerciſes his Authority without controul, being ſubject to no body; But, the Head of the Church is Chriſt, who Rules it by his Word, announced to us by the Teachers of the Church; ſo, that a Sovereign cannot as much as claim the Right of being Chriſt's Vicegerent in the Church; And, on the other hand, tho' it is ſaid of Chriſt, *That all Power is given unto him in Heaven, and upon Earth*, nevertheleſs it

cannot be said of him, to be, in the same manner, the Head of Civil Societies, as of the Church. The next following Assertion runs thus: *Where the whole Commonwealth is not composed out of Christians, the Church is a Congregation of the Believers in the Commonwealth.* But, where all Subjects are Christians, the Church is nevertheless nothing else than a Colledge in the Commonwealth. But what he alledges of the Church being sometimes taken in the same sense with the Commonwealth, is absolutely false. For the words, κατ' ἐκκλησίαν in *Acts* 14 23. and those in *Titus* 1. 5. κατὰ πόλιν are no Synoms; but the latter is to be understood thus: In all the Towns and Cities, where there was any Christian Church. The Inference he would make from the Military Function, and the Administration of Justice, being both included in one Government, is to no purpose; both of them owing their Off-spring to that End for which Civil Societies were instituted, which is not the same in the Church; and Sovereigns are entrusted with the Sword of War and Justice, not with the Ministerial Function of Preaching the Gospel. From whence it comes, that Generals and Judges are subordinate to the Princely Office, but not the Ministers of the Gospel, they being (barely considered as such) not properly Ministers of the Prince and State, but Ministers of Christ and the Church. He says further; *That the assignation of the Ministerial Function does not appertain to the Internal part of Religion.* But if Faith comes from hearing, and no body can believe, without being

being inſtructed; it is undeniable, that thoſe that Preach the Goſpel, have a ſhare in the internal part of Religion, they being to be conſidered as the Inſtruments, by the help of whom, the Goſpel, and conſequently the Faith, is conveyed to their Auditors. It is falſe, when he aſſerts, That Sovereigns, tho' no Chriſtians, have a Right of conſtituting Miniſters; *For*, ſays he, *their Right is the ſame.* But a Prince, who makes not Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Faith, tho' he has Chriſtian Subjects under his Juriſdiction, and allows them the free Exerciſe of their Religion, has nevertheleſs not the leaſt Power over their Church, as being no Member of it. It is no leſs falſe, what he ſays, that ſince Princes are become Chriſtians, the Vocation of Miniſters does no more depend from the Church; *Juſt as a Man, by ſubmitting himſelf under another Juriſdiction, is no more at his own diſpoſal.* For, a Prince by becoming a Member of the Church, does thereby not make himſelf Maſter of that Church, but rather ſubmits to the Obedience of Chriſt, the Head of the Church; and therefore does not incroach all its Rights to himſelf, but only can claim his ſhare as ſuch, unleſs a certain Church ſhould voluntarily ſurrender its Rights, as far as it lies in its power, to the Sovereign. And I ſee no reaſon, why the Church may not be under the Protection of a Chriſtian Sovereign, *as repreſenting a certain Perſon in the Commonwealth, and therefore to Act and Decree by plurality of Votes, which implies a Right, at leaſt by Conſent.* For, there is a *Medium* betwixt the State or Commonwealth and

and a disorderly Multitude, *viz.* a Colledge, where there is no occasion for a coertive Sovereign Power. This may be illustrated by an Example: For, supposing in a Commonwealth a certain Society or Company of Merchants, regulated by certain Statutes of their own, under the Direction of some of its own Members. Into this Colledge a Prince has a mind to be received as a Member, paying his certain share. By being thus made a Member of this Company, he has not obtained an absolute disposal over this Society; but rather has accommodated himself to the Statutes of the Colledge, neither can he claim any other Prerogative there, but what is derived either from his share in that Company, or from a free Gift, and voluntary consent of the rest of its Members; and as a Member of this Colledge he is to be considered, not as a Prince, but as a Merchant. There is nevertheless one remarkable difference, *viz.* That it is in the Power of a Sovereign to hinder the setting up of such a Society, which is not the same in regard of the Church. He plainly betrays his Ignorance, when he says: *That the Church is to be considered as a multitude of People, comprehended in the Person of one Prince; from whence the Prince represents the People, like one Publick Person, through whom the whole People declare their Sentiments.* For, tho' this be appliable to the Commonwealth, it is not to the Church, they being quite different from one another. It cannot be denied, but that those who have the Sovereign Power in the State, may Enact what Laws they think most convenient; But

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to attribute the same Power to Sovereigns over the Church, is a Madness, and savours of Blasphemy. And, supposing a Prince should be misled into Errors, or Heresie, must therefore the whole Church be accounted Erroneous, or Heretical? Except he would perswade us also, that Princes are Infallible. Wherefore in those places where the Election of Ministers is independent from the Prince, it is supposed to proceed from a Right transferred unto him by the Church; The same is to be understood, where this Election is managed either by the Bishops or Presbyters. But in case the same be done by the whole Church, it would be prepostorous to say, that such an Election was made by vertue of a Priviledge granted by the Prince. Mr. *Houtuyn* having granted before, *That the Pastoral Function, not being annexed to any certain Person, (considered as such) had no dependency from the Civil Jurisdiction, but owed its Institution to Christ.* Nevertheless in §. LXVI. he affirms: *That the actual Administration of the Ministerial Function is an External Publick Act, such as is subject to the Civil Power.* Which is the same in effect, as if he said, Matrimony is a Divine Institution, but it depends from the Prince, whether he will allow his Subjects to Marry actually or not. For, supposing a Sovereign should take a Resolution to forbid the antient Exercise of the Ministerial Function, what would, in such a Case, become of this Pastoral or Ministerial Function? It is also insufferable what he says immediately after: *An Election is a voluntary Act, therefore revocable at pleasure*; it being certain,

tain, that it cannot be done without impairing the Reputation of the Minister.

What relates to §. LXVII. It is denied, that *Nebuchadonosor had any legal Authority* to put to Death such as refused to adore the great Statue, set up by his Order. For, a Prince who inflicts any Punishment upon his Subjects, against the express Command of the holy Scripture, does not, at that time exercise his legal Authority, but commits an hostile and tyrannical Act. So, when King *Ahab*, under pretence of a legal Process, and by subborning of false Witnesses, possess'd himself of *Naboth*'s Vineyard, did no more exercise his legal Jurisdiction, than a Guardian may be said to do, when he commits a Rape upon a Pupil committed to his Management. But, when the same *Nebuchadonosor* publishes his Edict, *That no body dare to blaspheme the God of the Jews*, he did, without all question, nothing but what belong'd to his high Station. He runs on further; *viz.* That *Peter*, *John*, *Stephen*, *Paul*, nay, even our Saviour himself, did appear before the *Sanhedrim*, before *Felix*, *Festus*, *Cæsar* and *Pilate*, without taking the least Exception against the legality of their Jurisdiction. What could be more falsely invented? Did *Peter* and *John* acknowledge the Jurisdiction of the *Sanhedrim* in respect of the Christian Doctrine, when they told them to their very Faces, that they would not obey their Command, of not preaching in the Name of Jesus? Did *Stephen* acknowledge the Jurisdiction of the *Sanhedrim*, when he told them, You uncircumcised in your Hearts and Ears, you

Act. 4. 19, 20.

you always resist the holy Ghost? Neither is it an Argument, that *Paul*, and an infinite Number of Martyrs did acknowledge the Jurisdiction of those Princes, and other Civil Magistrates, when they, being forced to appear before them, endeavoured to prove their Innocence, there being no other Tribunal to which they could appeal; and it being at that time look'd upon as a Crime deserving Death, for any one to profess himself a Christian. All the defence they made may be reduced under two Heads: For they either denied those Crimes laid to their Charge, as calumnious, or else they asserted even to the last, That the profession of the Christian Religion did not depend from the Civil Jurisdiction. And those Magistrates that absolved the Confessors of this Truth, did in effect give this Sentence: *That this was a Cause not belonging to their Jurisdiction.* It is a wonder to me how Mr. *Howsyn*, who pretends to be a Lawyer, can find out any thing in the least resembling a legal Process in that Action of *Pilate*, it being to be considered no otherwise than a publick Robbery, and *a power of darkness*, since in all his Proceedings, there is not a footstep of a legal Process to be met with. And it is so manifest, that, when religious Matters were in question, the due Method and judicial Order of a legal Process have been violated a thousand times over and over, that it would be superfluous to alledge any Examples of it here. When Sovereigns punish or chastise a Pastor or Minister of the Church, who has abused his Function, or been defective in it, this power does properly not

Luk. 22. 53.

not proceed from the Civil Jurisdiction, but from a Right translated to the Sovereign by the Church. But those that are punished by the Civil Authority, because *they have stirr'd up, by their turbulent Speeches and Sermons, the People to Rebellion against their Sovereigns, or have attempted to withdraw the Auditors from, and to resist the Power of a legal Jurisdiction*, cannot be said to undergo Punishment on the account of the Christian Religion. Furthermore, it is false, that the Church (considered as such) can claim any Jurisdiction, properly speaking. It is no less false, that the Power of disposing and exercising those Functions, belonging to each Church, is a civil Act, in regard of its publick Effect. Mr. *Houtuyn* has been drawn into all these Errors, by confounding the Commonwealth with the Church. If these two be not very nicely distinguished, but we allow the Church to be entirely swallowed up in the civil Power, what have we got by shaking of the Popish Yoak? For, the condition of the Church will be never the better, if all Ecclesiastical Matters, without Exception are left to the arbitrary Disposal of Sovereigns; To maintain which, Mr. *Houtuyn*, in contradiction to all Reason and the Scripture it self, has invented; *A Spiritual Good, or the eternal Welfare of People, as the main End and Duty of the Sovereign Power*; By Vertue of which, he enables his Prince to force his Subjects to profess publickly what Religion he will be pleased to impose upon them, tho' never so contrary to their own Opinion. For it may be sufferable for a Man to keep his own Opinion concealed to himself, but to be oblig'd

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to profeſs what is quite contrary to it, is both abominable and intolerable. The Saying of *Conſtantine the Great*, ſo much extoll'd by Mr. *Hontuyn* himſelf, is contradictory to his Aſſertion, *viz. That he could have wiſh'd, all his Subjects to have been Chriſtians, but that he never forced any.* For, this Emperour not only never attempted to force any one from his own Opinion (which indeed was beyond his Power) but alſo never conſtrained his Subjects to profeſs themſelves Chriſtians againſt their own Inclinations. Our Author does alſo not a little contradict himſelf, in what he ſays concerning Words, ſometimes exempting them from any civil Cogniſance; whereas, before he had made them liable to the civil Juriſdiction: *What*, ſays he; *if our Faith expreſs'd by Words ſhould come to the knowledge of our Sovereign? It ought to be look'd upon not ſo much as a Crime, but rather as an Error, to correct which, is not to be effected by Puniſhments (which do illuminate our Mind) but rather by good Inſtructions.* But thoſe that know the real difference betwixt the Commonwealth and Church, that is to ſay, betwixt the State and a Colledge, may without much difficulty diſſolve theſe knotty Queſtions, which he has ſtarted concerining the Juriſdiction and Legiſlative Power of Princes over the Church.

As to the §. LXIX. It is to be obſerved, that it is put beyond all queſtion, that Sovereigns have a Right to give the Authority and Force of a Law to ſuch Statutes as they find ſuitable to the State, it being their Prerogative to determine, according to what Laws Judgment is to be given in Civil Courts of Judicature, what

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is punishable, and what is to be left to the Conscience of every Subject. But it implies no Absurdity, to attribute to Sovereigns a Right of giving publick Authority to Prophesies themselves, neither the Intrinsick nor Historical Faith having any dependence on the Civil Jurisdiction, by the force of which Subjects may be obliged to act, but not to believe. From whence it is evident, that if any Prophecy appear to be from God, it cannot receive any Addition by the Authority of the Prince, no more than if he should declare *Cicero* to be a good *Latin* Author. But in case a pretended Prophecy be either ambiguous or supposititious in it self, and a Prince should persuade himself to be able by his own Authority to make it pass current for Truth, he would be look'd upon as one beyond his Senses; What he insinuates concerning the New Testament in general, is much of the same Stamp: *It was not*, says he, *in the power of Christ and his Apostles, to establish this Doctrine* (of the New Testament) *by Publick Authority, which was the reason it remain'd in a private condition until such time when Princes having received the Christian Faith, they gave it a publick Authority, and the force of Laws.* But the Rules and Doctrine of Christ cannot receive any additional Strength from the Civil Power, it being contrary to its Genius to be established and promoted by civil Punishments; For, whosoever out of fear of Temporal Punishments, professes in outward shew only this Doctrine, does not act according to, nor fulfil the Will of Christ.

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The same may be repliy'd to §. LXX. For, as the Scripture and the Christian Doctrine do not owe their Authority to the civil Jurisdiction, the latter being introduced in the Government by God's peculiar Assistance, inspite of all the Resistance of the civil Powers; So ought the Interpretation of the the ambiguous and controverted Passages in the holy Scripture, not to be determined by the Sovereign Authority; it belonging not to the Prince only, but to the whole Church, or such as are authorised by the Church; tho' at the same time, the Prince, considered as the Chief Member of it, cannot be excluded from having his share in such a Debate. It is a prophane Expression when he says: *Christ himself having an unquestionable Power of introducing a new Law, must needs have a right to interpret the same. But, since during the time of his abode here, he lived among those, that either out of Ignorance or Disobedience did not own Christ, and that in a private Condition, subject to the civil Power; it is evident, that his Laws, Doctrine, and the Interpretation of them, did acquire their obliging Power, and publick Authority from the civil Constitution.* A little more would have made the Office of Christ, as being Mediator of the World, also dependent from the civil Jurisdiction. Is it not a prodigious Absurdity to affirm; *That the Doctrine of Christ has received its publick Authority from the civil Power, among those, who denied Christ?* And what follows: *That, if at the time of Christ, Princes had been Christians, they would have acknowledged him for the true God, and the Son of God, submitting themselves to his Judgment; so,*

that the Interpretation of the Christian Doctrine would have been owing by Christ, to their Submission. Away with such Fictions not agreeable even to common Sense. He might as well say, that God's Power over us Mortals did owe its original to the submission of Princes; and in case they thought fit to withdraw themselves from this Obedience, God Almighty (I cannot relate it without horror) must thereby be reduced to the Condition of a private Person.

In the next Assertion, he is not altogether so much beyond his Senses, when he grants, even to Pagan Princes, a Right of determining the controverted Points among Christians, which is as much as to make a blind Man a competent Judge of the difference of Colours. When the Primitive Christians were forced to appear before the Pagan Judges, it was not on the Account of the Interpretation of the Scripture; The Christians could never be guilty of so gross an Error, as to Consult with the Unbelieving concerning the controverted Articles of Faith; But, being forced, against their will, to appear before them, they could not avoid to receive their Judgment, such as they were pleased to give, as having no way left them to decline it. Furthermore, our Author is pleased to affirm, That such an Interpretation ought to be look'd upon as establish'd by Publick Authority, which carries along with it an obliging force, at least in outward appearance; so, that Subjects are obliged to conform themselves to it by a verbal Confession, tho' never so discrepant,

pant, from that Opinion, they keep concealed within their hearts. But, the outward Behaviour, and verbal Confessions of a Christian, which are not agreeable to the true Sentiments of his Heart, having not the least affinity with Religion it self, I don't see, upon what Account this Chimerical Power is attributed to Princes, unless it be, to furnish them with a specious pretext to afflict their Innocent Subjects. Thus much is certain, that Christ did not command his Doctrine to be propagated by forcible means; so, that, supposing the Articles, thus established by the Civil Authority, to be never so consonant to Truth, it is nevertheless inconsistent with the Genius of the Christian Religion, to impose them upon Subjects by force, and under severe Penalties; But, supposing them to be false, the case of Subjects must needs be very miserable, when they suffer Punishment, because they will not profess an erroneous or false Doctrine. I see no other benefit to be reap'd from the egregious Assertions of our Author, than to serve for a Justification of the most Tyrannical Persecutions that have been, and to declare them to have been done by Vertue of a Legal Authority. At this rate it will be no difficult Task to justifie the Proceedings against the Protestants in *France*, which move both Pity and Horror in all good Men, at least, Mr. *Houtuyn* has very freely offered his Advice and Patronage. What follows next, is very smartly said, to wit, *That the Coersive Power may be Legal, wherein the Act of Obedience is not allowable.* No body of common sense but will acknowledge,

knowledge, that this implies a most manifest Contradiction, and, that the Legal Sovereign Authority, and the Obligation of paying Obedience to it, are inseparable from one another. Yet with this Nicety Mr. *Hontayn* is so mightily taken, that he does not consider, that at the same time, he grants an absolute Authority to his Prince, to persecute his Subjects on the Account of Religion, he takes away from them the Power of denying the true Religion. But, what Reason can be given, why the one should have a coersive Power, where the other cannot obey; unless it be done on purpose to encourage ambitious and imperious Princes, either to force their Subjects to a sinful compliance, or never to want an Opportunity of afflicting the Innocent at Pleasure? For those that take to these violent ways of propagating the Faith, or rather (to speak Truth) Hypocrisie and Superstition, by their booted Apostles, are not contented to silence their Subjects, dissenting from them in Point of Religion, who are also debarr'd even to save themselves by flight; (tho' it be no small Misfortune to a Subject, to be forced to leave his Native Country) but they compel them to profess publickly those things for Truth, which they abhor in their Hearts, and appear to be Idolatrous, Superstitious, or Fictitious; invented on purpose by those that make their Market by Religion. Mr. *Hontayn* himself cannot but confess, *That no body can safely acquiesce in any determination made concerning an Article of Faith, unless by his own private Judgment he find it agreeable to the Word*

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of God. And, if he find it not consonant to that, he ought not to rest satisfied in it, for fear he should disown his Faith, this being the worst, and most unbecoming thing belonging to a Christian. But, if it be unbecoming a Christian to deny his Faith, which is the same in effect, *as to rest satisfied in ones own private Opinion and Conscience, to keep secret within the heart what one believes, not to indulge ones Tongue, and to refrain from External Actions.* This being the Advice (which in contradiction to himself, he had not long before given to the Dissenting Subjects) what Reason can he give for his Assertion; when he attributes to his Prince a Power so unlimited, that his Christian Subjects must either be forced to undergo such an Indignity, or else the most horrible Persecutions that can be invented? The first Inventer of this unlimited Power, as far as ever I could learn, was Mr. *Thomas Hobbs*, the worst Interpreter that ever was in Divinity; whose Opinion, as to this kind, no body has taken so much pains to revive with the same Impudence, as Mr. *Adrian Houtuyn*. What I most admire at, is, that this should be attempted by one living in a State, whose Maxims are quite opposite to these Principles, and where consequently he could not reasonably propose to himself any Reward of his Adulation; There being not the least likelihood that the States General of the *United Provinces* should ever lay claim to such a Power; As it is not very probable that Princes will apply themselves to the Ministry of the Church, and undertake the Publick Exercise of the Pastoral

Paſtoral Function in Perſon; ſo, that I cannot ſee, to what purpoſe our Author has been ſo careful in aſſerting it, in the behalf of Sovereigns; Unleſs he has pleaſed himſelf with this Fancy, that his Aſſertions cannot fail to make him to be the more admired among the Youngſters, by how much the more remote they are from common Senſe. Thus much at preſent for Mr. *Hoadly*.

FINIS.

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